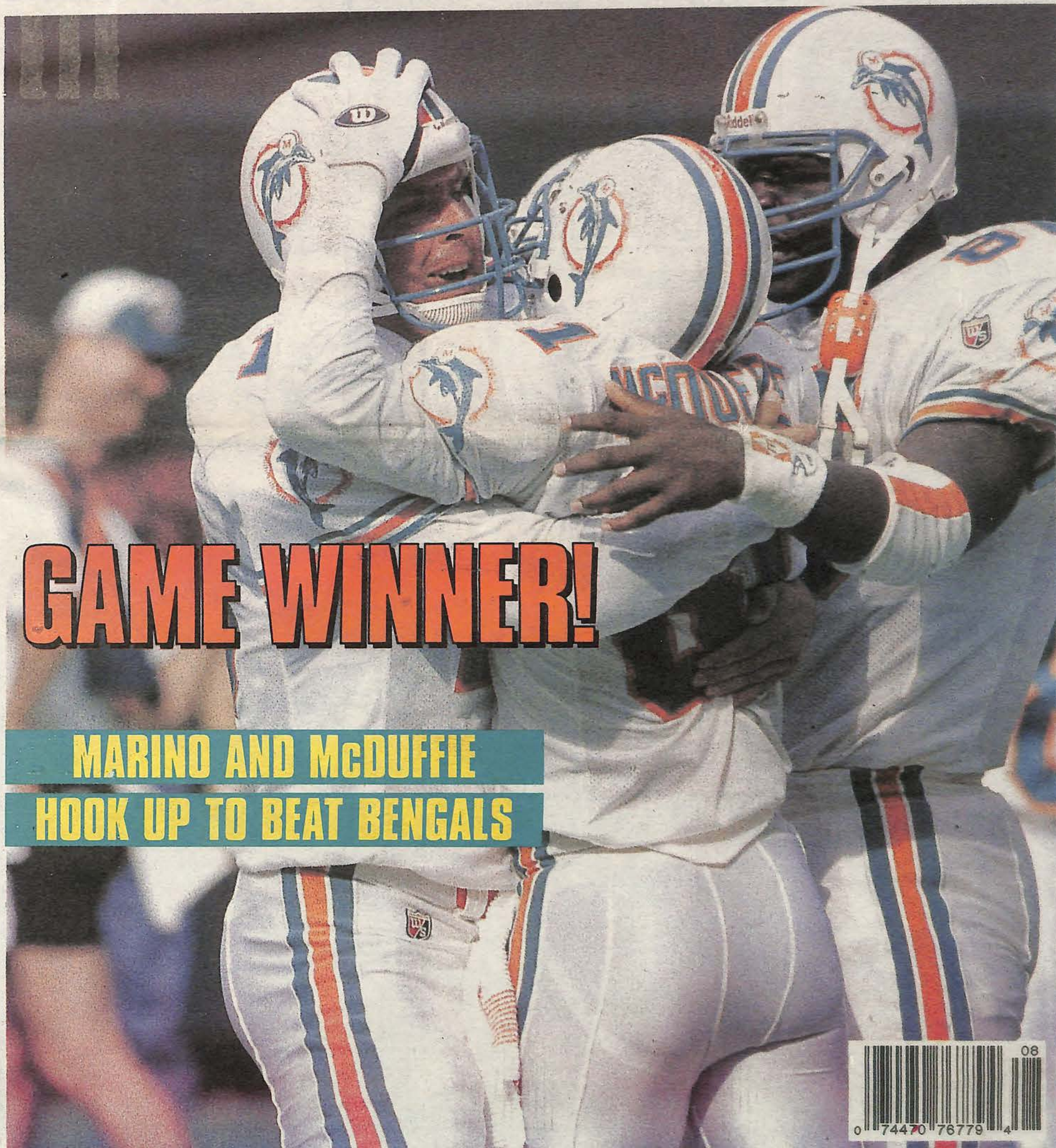


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Dolphin **DIGEST**

Volume 24, Number 8

OCTOBER 7, 1995 (642) \$2.50



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A black and white photograph of a football jersey laid flat. The jersey is dark-colored with the number "13" in large, white, outlined numerals on the back. Above the number, there is a small, light-colored patch. The collar is visible at the top, and the sleeves extend to the left and right.

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Concerns surface in Cincinnati

CINCINNATI — Dave Shula probably will never beat his father in an NFL game. They won't meet in the playoffs and it could be years before the Dolphins play in Cincinnati again. Dave hosted Dad two straight years but came up short.

He had the opportunity to win last Sunday and I am sure Dad felt



TOM

CURTIS

PUBLISHER

for his son when it was all over. Don's son was clearly over-matched, yet the game was very competitive and close to the end.

The Bengals did something no other team in 1995 has been able to do — run the football on the Dolphins — and it almost meant victory. Cincinnati rushed for 144 yards, more than twice the season average against Miami. And it wasn't Emmitt Smith or Barry Sanders or even Ki-Jana Carter running the ball. It was Harold Green and Eric Bieniemy.

This can't continue. The Dolphins have been much-improved against the run, but it was troubling to see the Bengals so successful. You can be sure other teams will notice and, beginning Sunday when Marshall Faulk comes to town, that rushing defense will be tested in a big way.

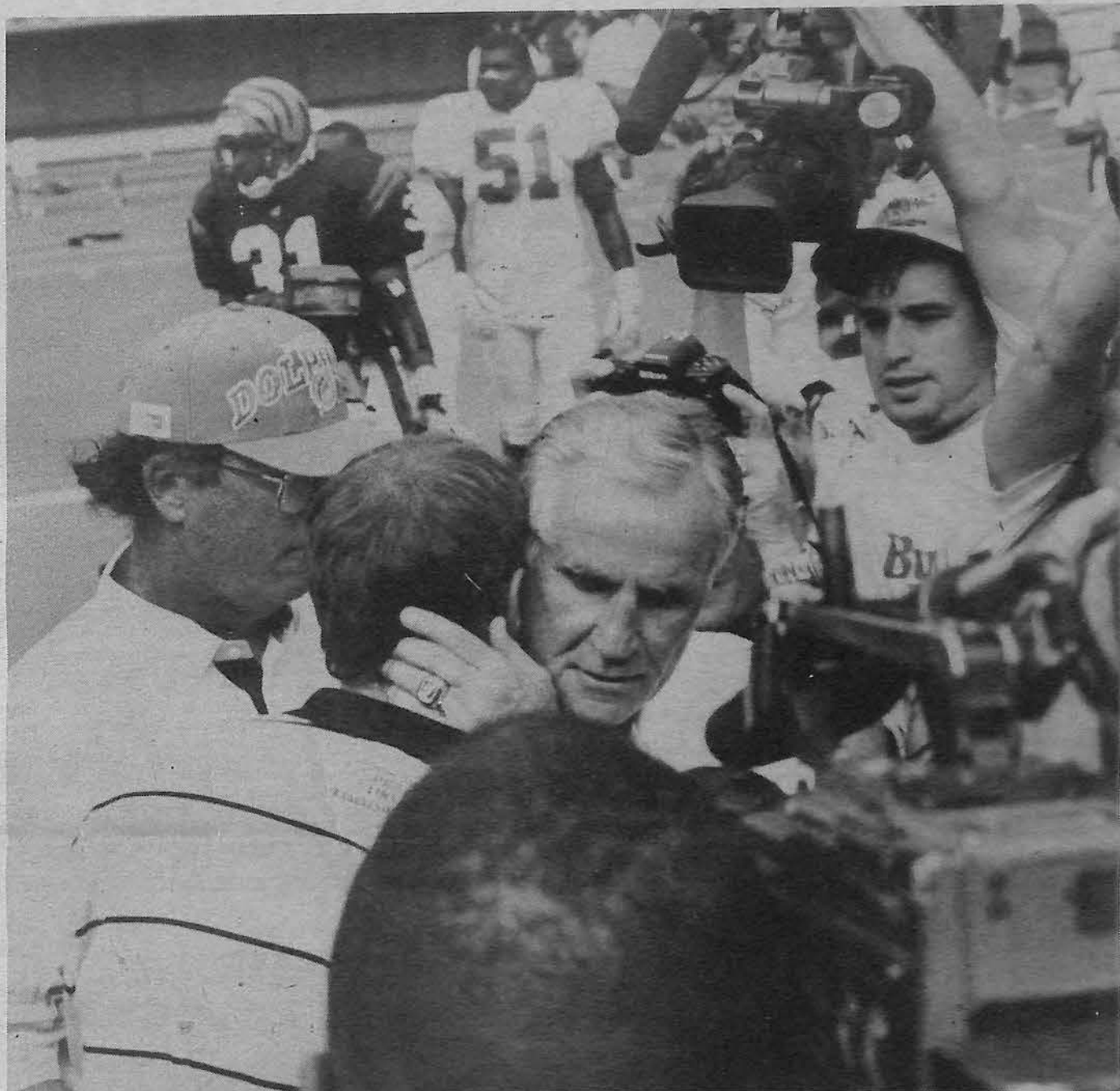
There were other concerns that surfaced against the Bengals. The signs were there that the bye week had not helped the Dolphins and they were less than ready to play. Fourteen penalties. Missed tackles. Mental mistakes. Dropped balls.

The Dolphins survived because of Dan Marino and stand as the only unbeaten team in the NFL. Marino didn't get the support he needed, and that can't keep up.

The defense was burned at every level. The down linemen jumped offside and played mediocre against the run and pass. The linebackers missed tackles, made mental mistakes and did not play with the passion of the first three weeks. The secondary gave up three touchdowns and did not produce a turnover.

Bryan Cox told everyone within earshot on the return flight how poorly he played. He could have been joined by others. Fellow linebacker Chris Singleton played worse than Cox and the talk of a Pro Bowl for Troy Vincent is on hold for a week.

The Bengals averaged six yards on every running play and Carl Pickens torched the defense for 117 receiving yards and three touchdowns. The Dolphins deserved to



Don Shula tried to console his son after last Sunday's game at Cincinnati, but the Dolphins coach had to have a few concerns of his own after his team's less-than-spectacular showing.

Digest Photo/KEN KEIDEL

lose on defense but the offense bailed them out, this time.

The balance on offense went bye-bye in Cincinnati, as the Dolphins threw the ball on 49 of 69 plays. The three running backs averaged under three yards per attempt and the team was losing in the second, third and fourth quarters.

During the first three wins of '95, Marino had handed off more times than he had gone back to pass. But just as we all knew, there would come a time when the responsibility to win would be turned over to No. 13.

The legend of Marino has been made by performances like the one last Sunday. He brought his team back time and time again; the 30th fourth-quarter win of his career went into the books, as if it was expected of him. We — you, me, the Shulas, the players, and football fans everywhere — watch Marino play and will always remember.

This Sunday at Joe Robbie Sta-

dium, Marino will break the record for career completions by an NFL quarterback. He will own most of the career quarterbacking records in the league by season's end and we are lucky to have seen him play. However, Marino has not won a Super Bowl and the fable will not be complete until he does.

Marino will never have a better chance than in 1995. At 34 years old, he is still in his prime but no one knows when those legs or that magical arm will give way to age. Joe Montana won his last Super Bowl at 33 and was out of football five years later.

Marino looks ready. And it is best that he practice winning against the Bengals; when he has to against the 49ers in December, or the Raiders in the playoffs, or the Cowboys in the Super Bowl, it will be much more important.

He threw for 450 yards on Sunday, the fourth-highest total in his 13 years with the Dolphins, and

overcame three Cincinnati leads. Eric Green, O.J. McDuffie and the offensive line certainly deserve some of the credit, but the fact is the Dolphins would have lost without Marino.

The entire team has another important test this week against the Colts. Faulk is much better than Green and Bieniemy; anyone who thinks the Colts won't try the Miami run defense is mistaken.

Jim Harbaugh cannot beat the Dolphins by throwing the ball. It will take a ball control game of keep-away from Marino for the Colts to succeed. Cox & Company must stop Faulk time and time again on first down and force Harbaugh to put the ball up.

It is important the mistakes that surfaced against Cincinnati be corrected. You can't count on Marino to throw for 450 yards every week. Still, it is nice to know that, when all else fails, he is there to bail you out.

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DIGEST

VOLUME 24, NUMBER 8

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On the cover ...

Quarterback Dan Marino and wide receiver O.J. McDuffie combined to help the Dolphins pull out a last-minute victory at Cincinnati last Sunday that left Miami as the only undefeated team in the league.

Cover Photo/KEN KEIDEL



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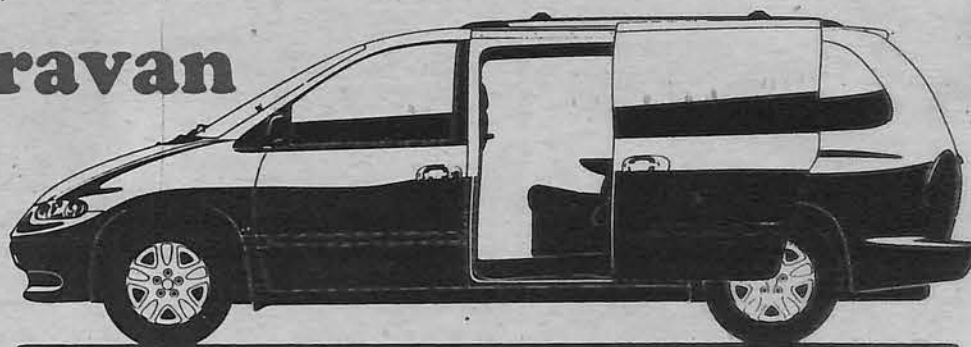
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Secondary experienced, deep

Mel Phillips is in his 11th season as defensive backs coach with the Dolphins and this may be the most overall talent that he has had to coach during his tenure with Miami.



**MEL
PHILLIPS**
DEFENSIVE
BACKS COACH

Last season, the play of the defensive backs (corners Troy Vincent and J.B. Brown and safeties Gene Atkins and Michael Stewart) enabled the Dolphins' defense to tie the Super Bowl champion San Francisco 49ers for the NFL lead in interceptions.

This year, the defensive backfield returned all four of its starters and added quality depth in safety Louis Oliver and cornerback Terrell Buckley. With those pieces in place, Phillips and the Dolphins look for even more success in 1995.

Q. As a unit, is this the most talented group of players you've had since you've been here?

A. I think that as a group, right down the line including all nine players, that it might be true. I feel that our front-line players are a veteran group and we have veteran backups with experience for the most part. It may be the most experienced group that I think I've had.

Q. So much has been written about Troy Vincent and his desire to be considered one of the top corners in the league. Is he there, and what makes him such a special player?

A. I think Troy has as much talent as most corners in the NFL. In fact, he's probably better than most. In the NFL, as a corner, you're only as good as your last game. For him to get the recognition that he thinks he deserves, he's got to produce every Sunday. He's got to do it on the

field. At the end of the year, if he plays the way he's capable of playing, then the players and the people around football will recognize him.

Q. Talk about the play of J.B. Brown. Are Brown and Vincent the best pair of coverage corners in the league?

A. I think that J.B. has been very consistent for us over the years. Knock on wood, he hasn't had a serious injury since he's been here and he's been able to play in every game. I think that they are two of the better corners in the league, but that will only come out at the end of the season.

Q. Michael Stewart and Gene Atkins are together for the second straight season. Was it a difficult transition process a year ago, and how well do they work together now?

A. It's tough when two guys come in from different teams and different defensive philosophies and they both have to learn our defensive philosophy. They can learn our defense, but they have to learn it so they can put themselves in position to make plays. It takes time. I thought that early last season we didn't play quite as well as we would have liked to as a unit. But as the season progressed, I thought they both learned to work together, talk to each other, talk to other players and understand what we want to get done. They played pretty good from the second half of the season on. This year, there is no comparison. In camp, they knew everything about our defense, while before they were trying to



Troy Vincent

pick up every little detail. I can see more productivity from both of them a lot earlier now than it happened last year. Michael and Gene are having an excellent season for us so far.

Q. How good do you feel about your fifth, sixth and seventh defensive backs?

A. I feel pretty good. I probably feel as good right now as I think I probably ever have. When we've got a guy like Louis Oliver who can come into the game at safety in a crucial situation or a guy like Terrell Buckley who can move in in a key situation or a Frankie Smith who has been here three or four years, it makes you feel pretty good. Depth is one of the things that we were really looking to get. That hurt us a couple of years ago. Our front-line players went down and our backup people couldn't hold up. But if it

should happen now, I feel really good about our depth.

Q. How do you view Louis Oliver's role, and can you sympathize with his frustration of not starting?

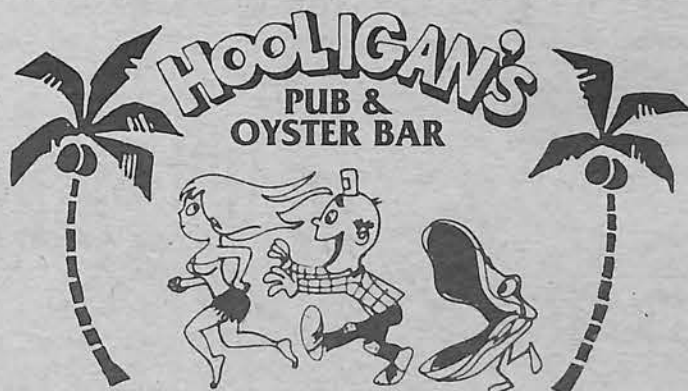
A. Anytime that you have a football player who can play, he's not going to be happy not playing and I think that's the way that it should be. Louis is a very intense worker on and off the field. He puts everything he has into the game. When his time comes to step on the field he wants to be prepared. Good players always want to play. So I can understand him being a little frustrated. But I know that he is a team player. He's going to do whatever it takes to help us win.

Q. How much does the improved pass rush help the defensive backs?

A. What we do in the secondary all starts up front. If the pass rush is there, it helps us quite a bit. We can clamp down on receivers and cover them a little bit tighter knowing that the ball has to be thrown in a certain amount of time. It just helps our whole coverage situation. The key to everything we do is basically based on how well our front four does in rushing the passer.

Q. Last year, the defense tied for the NFL lead in interceptions and this year you are off to an excellent start in getting interceptions. How much do you stress the importance of turnovers?

A. We stress it quite a bit in the meetings and in practice. We are back there to defend the pass and make plays, whether that means to get a fumble or an interception. When you play a team and can come up with plays that result in two or three turnovers, it gives our offense the ball and the extra time in a game is a big advantage for us.



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BACK Of all TRADES

By CRAIG DOLCH
Digest Correspondent

His teammates were almost afraid to look as he crumpled to the ground. It was early in the season, but the man who recently was named the Miami Dolphins' most valuable player appeared to be hurt. Badly.

If he couldn't return, there was no question the Dolphins' hopes of making the Super Bowl would be dealt a severe blow. Perhaps no player in the NFL can do as many things for his offense as this grizzled veteran.

No problem. After waiting a few minutes to make sure he wasn't severely hurt, fullback Keith Byars got up and was helped off the field.

When he returned to the sidelines, so did the Dolphins' chances of playing in a roman-numeraled game in late January.

"It was just a scare," Byars said. "I'm fine." So, too, are the Dolphins.

Dan Marino's bruised sternum during a Monday night game against Pittsburgh might have gotten more attention, but Byars' ability to withstand the hit during the New England game a week earlier may be just as vital to the Dolphins' success this season. The media recognized Byars' importance by voting him the Dolphins' MVP after the 1993 season, when Marino was sidelined with a torn Achilles tendon. That broke Marino's 10-year streak of being named team MVP.

"Keith just means so much to this football team," Dolphins guard Keith Sims said.

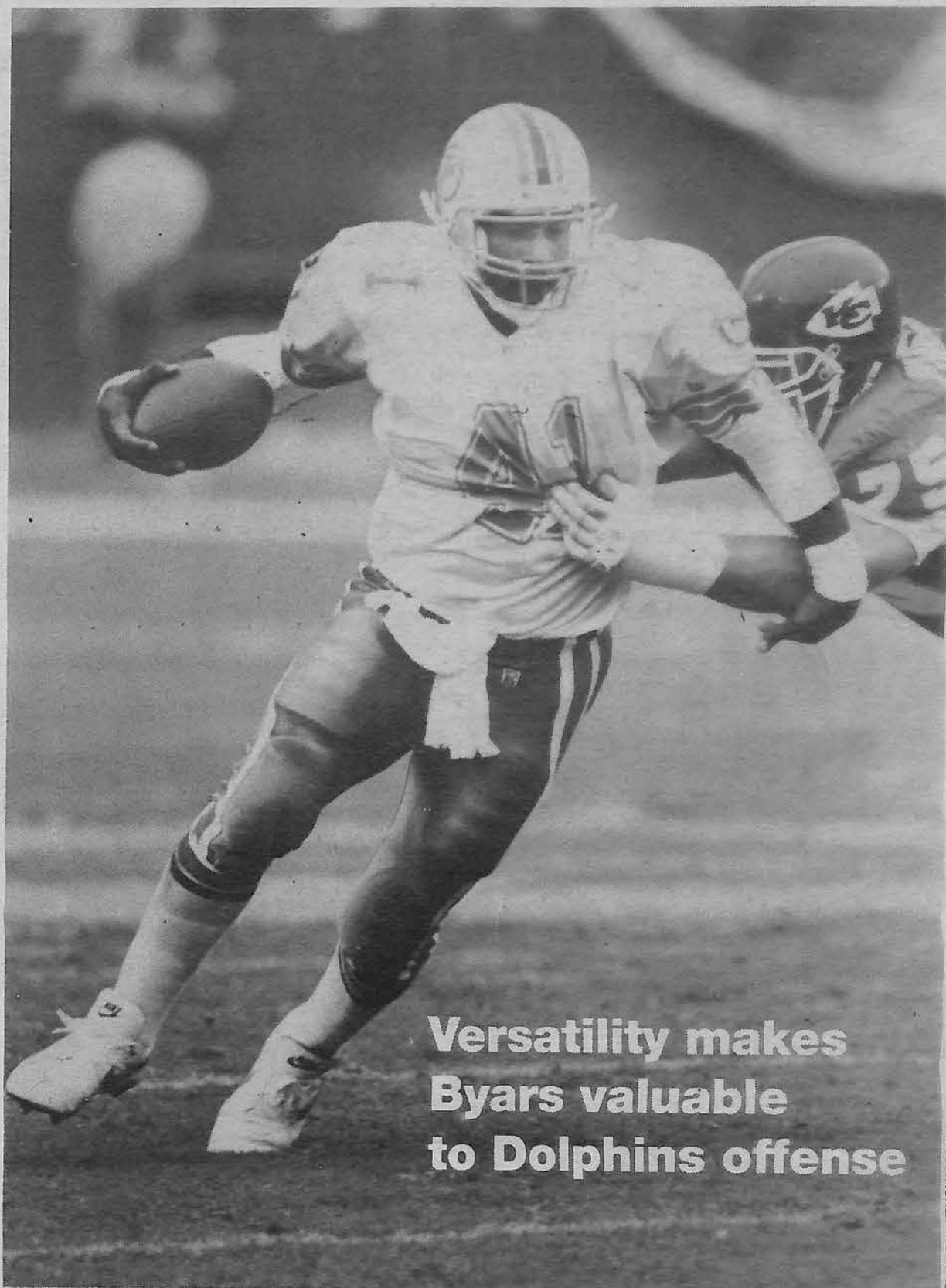
"When he's in our offense, we have the ability to do so much because he's a great blocker, a great runner and a great receiver."

The Dolphins were reminded of Byars' importance last season, when he missed the last seven games with torn anterior cruciate and medial collateral ligaments in his right knee. Without Byars' versatility, not even Marino's magic could get Miami as far as the AFC Championship game.

Little wonder there was silence on the Dolphins' sideline when Byars fell in the New England game.

"For a split second, it was like time freezes ... it seemed like it took 10 minutes for me to hit the ground," Byars said. "As I was hitting the ground, it was like, 'Oh, no, not again!' But after I rolled over, I was able to calm myself down because I had felt that pain before and I knew it wasn't that bad."

The last thing Byars — or the Dolphins — needed was for him to suffer another injury. He had overcome great odds in returning



**Versatility makes
Byars valuable
to Dolphins offense**

from his injury so fast (10 months). Normally, players are sidelined at least a year after tearing the ACL.

Despite playing only two series in the preseason, Byars proved he was back in the Dolphins' season-opening 52-14 win over the New York Jets. Byars caught a 1-yard touchdown and his 24-yard reception also set up another touchdown.

"A lot of people didn't think I'd be ready, but I give all my thanks to God," said Byars, who recently passed up an interview request because he was meditating with teammate Irving Fryar.

"The question was whether I'd be able to play 60 minutes. I knew I could. The only thing I was concerned about was being in football shape. I guess all those 6 a.m. wake-up calls paid off."

But Byars, 31, knows he's not all the way back to the level of a Pro Bowl player who ranked sixth in NFL history among running backs with 488 catches entering last Sunday's

game against Cincinnati; who has the league's seventh-longest streak with at least one catch in 116 consecutive games. Byars thinks it may be November — a year after the injury — before he'll be completely back to where he was before.

"I'm pleased with where it is, but it's one thing to do it, it's another to take it up to the next level," Byars said. "The leg is getting stronger. Every week is better than the week before. But I know the rehab is not over just because I'm back playing."

To look at his statistics, it wouldn't appear Byars means that much to the Dolphins. In the first three games, he had just one carry for 1 yard and seven catches for 62 yards and the TD.

But numbers have never come close to determining Byars' worth. Never have, never will.

"I learned a long time ago, the most important thing is to win," Byars said. "You win the game

See BYARS, next page

BYARS, from preceding page

first and let's talk about how to win it later."

Byars enables the Dolphins to win a variety of ways, because he handles a variety of roles. Few players in the league, if any, possess his ability to catch, run and block as well as the 10-year veteran.

It's not uncommon for him to handle the roles of fullback, tailback and tight end for the Dolphins — on the same series. That saves roster spots, and makes life difficult for opposing defensive coordinators.

"I want you to be in the film room studying films on me all week, because you don't know what I can do," Byars said of his opponents. "I've always prided myself in being a complete player. That way, when I come in, defenses won't know what's going to happen."

"My versatility helps our offense by giving us the flexibility of using a lot of different formations without changing personnel. We can cause a lot of matchup problems with me being able to play a lot of different positions."

Byars didn't always accept this role. When he came into the league as Philadelphia's No. 1 pick in 1986, he wanted to be like any other runner and strive for 1,000-yard seasons.

That goal was changed by Eagles coach Buddy Ryan, who's not exactly known for his offensive prowess. But Byars was criticized by Philadelphia's fans and media because he wasn't putting up huge rushing numbers.

"People kept saying I couldn't run the ball... well, I didn't run the ball enough,"

CATCHING CONSISTENCY

The longest receiving streaks in NFL history

Rk	Player	Team	No.
1	Art Monk	Wash./Jets	180
2	Steve Largent	Seattle	177
3	Ozzie Newsome	Cleveland	150
4	Jerry Rice	San Fran.	148*
5	Harold Carmichael	Philadelphia	127
6	Mel Gray	St. Louis	121
7	Keith Byars	Phi./Miami	116*

* active streak

Byars said. "Buddy pulled me aside and said the reason he brought me in was because I could do a lot. I kind of broke the mold of the running backs in the mid-1980s."

Problem was, Byars didn't get much credit for what he was doing. Despite being one of the league's best all-around players, he didn't earn his first Pro Bowl spot until 1993, his eighth season in the league.

"That cost me a lot of Pro Bowl trips," he said of his versatility. "People kept saying, 'He's an excellent player, but we don't know where to vote for him. Is he a tight end or a fullback?' But at the same time I was respected among my peers and I had the opportunity to do things not many players could do."

It took last year's injury for Byars to truly appreciate his opportunity to make a living playing professional football. Byars had missed two preseasons in Philly with a broken

foot, but nothing this major. His competitive instincts returned a lot sooner than his health.

"I remember watching the Pittsburgh game (Miami lost 16-13 in overtime), and I'm yelling and throwing pillows at the television set ... I was a mess," Byars said, smiling. "My wife is like, 'Why don't you watch the game in the bedroom by yourself?' So I hopped on my crutches and went in there."

Byars was fortunate that teammate Terry Kirby was recovering from a similar injury. The two pushed and motivated each other through their rehab.

Byars remembers standing under the goal posts alongside Kirby before last year's Monday night game against Kansas City, both of them longing to be back on the field.

"People kept asking me if I was going to retire," Byars said. "I saw there was too much competitive fire in me. Standing on the sideline alerted me to this: You should be playing football."

Once again he is, and the Dolphins couldn't be happier. For all his contributions on the field, he's also a presence in the locker room and the huddle.

"In sports, sometimes you underestimate chemistry and leaders," Sims said. "It's so great to have Keith Byars back this year, because he's the type of player who takes charge and pumps up everyone else."

That's just one of the many things Byars does well.

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- Game Ticket View Section
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dbl. occ.

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trpl. occ.

\$659

quad. occ.

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sgl. occ.

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dbl. occ.

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quad. occ.

\$399

sgl. occ.

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A	DELUXE OUTSIDE, SITTING AREA	\$3325
C	SUPERIOR OUTSIDE, UPPER DECKS	\$2550
E	STANDARD OUTSIDE, BALI DECK	\$2325
H	SUPERIOR INSIDE, PROMENADE DECK	\$1995
K	STANDARD INSIDE, PACIFIC DECK	\$1675

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Jackson makes most of action

By **CRAIG DOLCH**
Digest Correspondent

By most accounts, Calvin Jackson should be a senior cornerback for the Auburn Tigers. Instead, he's earning a different kind of education in the NFL's school of hard knocks.

Playing before a national television audience, Jackson passed one of his most important tests in the Dolphins' 23-10 win over the Pittsburgh Steelers on a Monday night game during Week 3.

Jackson, who was playing for injured Frankie Smith as the Dolphins' No. 6 cornerback, was even awarded a game ball by Don Shula after making three tackles and deflecting a pass that led to J.B. Brown's first-quarter interception.

"That game proved to myself that I can play in this league," Jackson said. "When you're not playing much, you sometimes doubt yourself. But that game helped me a lot."

The Steelers wasted no time testing Jackson, who was playing in only his fourth NFL game. Pittsburgh quarterback Mike Tomczak threw at Jackson on three third-down attempts in the first quarter.

Besides tipping the first pass, Jackson forced an incompletion on the second one and then tackled Andre Hastings 1 yard short of the first down on the third try. Jackson's solid play was noticed by ABC announcers Al Michaels and Dan Dierdorf — not to mention pro personnel directors around the league.

"We were hoping he would step in and do the job, and he did," Shula said of Jackson.

Jackson admits the last two years have been a struggle since he decided to leave Auburn after his sophomore year. Jackson was an All-SEC performer — his 94-yard interception return keyed Auburn's 38-35 comeback win over Florida —

PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

Cornerback Calvin Jackson is just one of six players on the Dolphins' active roster who also spent time on the team's practice squad. Here's a look at the six who have earned the promotion:

Player	Pos.	Year on PS
Ethan Albright	OT	1994
Dewayne Dotson	LB	1994
Calvin Jackson	CB	1994-95
Pat Johnson	S	1994
Frankie Smith	CB	1993
Mike Williams	WR	1991

but flunked out after the Tigers' 11-0 season in 1993.

Jackson could have remained at Auburn and sat out a year while he tried to regain his eligibility. He instead applied for the NFL's supplemental draft, but wasn't taken.

So Jackson, who was born in Miami and played at Fort Lauderdale Dillard High, signed with the Dolphins as a free agent before the 1994 training camp. He was released during camp, signed to the practice squad, activated for two early-season games, released again, then re-signed to the practice squad.

Jackson now sees the benefit of an up-and-down situation. "Being

on the practice squad helped me because it gave me a chance to learn the Dolphins' system and become more instinctive," he said.

Jackson wasn't so pleased, however, when the Dolphins traded for cornerback Terrell Buckley from Green Bay. Despite a good camp this year, the Dolphins kept Buckley and released Jackson for the third time, though he was once again brought back on the practice squad.

Jackson's second chance came when Smith was injured in the season opener against the Jets. Jackson played in the next two games and had five tackles through three games — two more than Buckley.

Despite his heroics against the Steelers, Jackson faces the prospect of being cut a fourth time by Miami because Smith is once again healthy. Of course, the Dolphins risk another team taking him if they release him for the fourth time.

Remember, this is a guy who should still be in college.

Said Dolphins defense coach Tom Olivadotti: "His best football should certainly be ahead of him."

THE LAST TIME ... OFFENSE

200 YARDS RUSHING

By Dolphins: Never
By Opponent: Rueben Mayes, at New Orleans (203), Dec. 7, 1986

100 YARDS RUSHING

By Dolphins: Bernie Parmalee, vs. Kansas City (127), Dec. 12, 1994
By Opponent: Thurman Thomas, at Buffalo (125), Oct. 9, 1994

400 YARDS PASSING

By Dolphins: Dan Marino, at Cincinnati (450), Oct. 1, 1995
By Opponent: Drew Bledsoe, New England (421), Sept. 4, 1994

300 YARDS PASSING

By Dolphins: Dan Marino, at Cincinnati (450), Oct. 1, 1995
By Opponent: Steve Bono, Kansas City (314), Dec. 12, 1994

200 YARDS RECEIVING

By Dolphins: Irving Fryar, vs. New England (211), Sept. 4, 1994
By Opponent: Ron Jessie, L.A. Rams (220), Oct. 3, 1976

100 YARDS RECEIVING

By Dolphins: Irving Fryar, at New England (113), Sept. 11, 1995
By Opponent: Carl Pickens, at Cincinnati (117), Oct. 1, 1995

FIVE TOUCHDOWN PASSES

By Dolphins: Dan Marino, vs. New England, Sept. 4, 1994
By Opponent: Joe Ferguson, Buffalo, Oct. 9, 1983

FOUR TOUCHDOWN PASSES

By Dolphins: Dan Marino, at N.Y. Jets, Nov. 27, 1994
By Opponent: Jim Kelly, Buffalo, Dec. 4, 1994

FOUR TD CATCHES

By Dolphins: Mark Ingram, at N.Y. Jets, Nov. 27, 1994
By Opponent: Wesley Walker, at N.Y. Jets, Sept. 21, 1986

THREE TD CATCHES

By Dolphins: Mark Ingram, at N.Y. Jets, Nov. 27, 1994
By Opponent: Carl Pickens, at Cincinnati, Oct. 1, 1995

FOUR TDS RUSHING

By Dolphins: Never
By Opponent: Earl Campbell, at Houston, Nov. 20, 1978

THREE TDS RUSHING

By Dolphins: Bernie Parmalee, vs. Detroit, Dec. 25, 1994
By Opponent: Natrone Means, at San Diego, Dec. 27, 1993

1995 DOLPHINS SCHEDULE

PRESEASON

Aug. 4	JACKSONVILLE	L, 24-21
Aug. 11	at Atlanta	L, 37-0
Aug. 19	WASHINGTON	W, 27-13
Aug. 25	vs. Tampa Bay at Orlando	L, 24-17

REGULAR SEASON

Sept. 3	NEW YORK JETS	W, 52-14
Sept. 10	at New England	W, 20-3
Sept. 18	PITTSBURGH	W, 23-10
Sept. 24	BYE	
Oct. 1	at Cincinnati	W, 26-23
Oct. 8	INDIANAPOLIS	4 p.m., NBC
Oct. 15	at New Orleans	4 p.m., NBC
Oct. 22	at New York Jets	1 p.m., NBC
Oct. 29	BUFFALO	4 p.m., NBC
Nov. 5	at San Diego	8 p.m., ESPN
Nov. 12	NEW ENGLAND	1 p.m., NBC
Nov. 20	SAN FRANCISCO	9 p.m., ABC
Nov. 26	at Indianapolis	1 p.m., NBC
Dec. 3	ATLANTA	1 p.m., FOX
Dec. 11	KANSAS CITY	9 p.m., ABC
Dec. 17	at Buffalo	1 p.m., NBC
Dec. 24	at St. Louis	4 p.m., NBC

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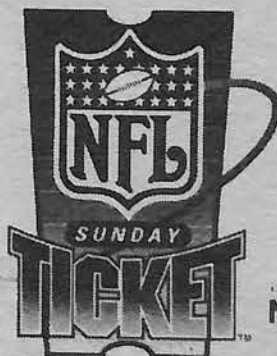
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NFL Notes

Rison catching on in Cleveland

It has been 31 years since the city once known as "The Mistake by the Lake" last won a pro football championship, and the locals got a little testy when it seemed the Cleveland Browns might have made a \$17 million mistake.

Steve Schoenfeld

Arizona Republic

So panic set in three weeks into the season because wide receiver **Andre Rison** had only five catches for 47 yards, a paltry contribution from a player the Browns made the richest wide receiver in league history.

Browns fans now can find something else to complain about. Rison caught four passes for 35 yards and one touchdown in their 35-17 victory over the Kansas City Chiefs.

"This is nothing like my coming-out party," Rison said. "My coming-out party is in Phoenix."

He was referring to Super Sunday, Super Bowl XXX on Jan. 28 at Sun Devil Stadium.

The biggest surprise going into the Chiefs game was that Rison wasn't as worried about his lack of production as those who brought giant plastic bones to their seats in the "Dawg Pound."

"I wasn't frustrated," said Rison, who received a \$5 million signing bonus, meaning in the first three games he earned \$1 million a catch.

"It's hard to get frustrated when you win two games in a row. I'm not worried about personal stats. I knew I'd have my day. I just wanted to win."

Long way from home

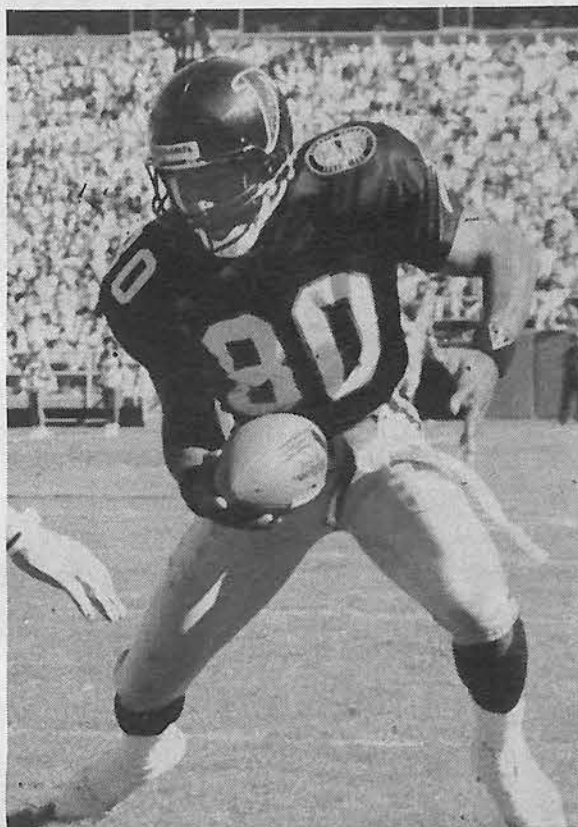
Without a trip to the movies or a barbecue on the beach, Minnesota Vikings offensive lineman **David Dixon** might have been just another ex-rugby player in New Zealand. But that's how his improbable journey to the NFL began nine years ago when Dixon was spotted by a stranger who was trying to bring pro football to the land of the kiwi.

"I was walking around the city, going to the movies and a guy walked up to me and asked if I wanted to play football," Dixon said.

Dixon decided it was worth a try even though he was on the national junior rugby team. He was spotted by former Utah State head coach **Chris Pella**, who knew a Mormon missionary from Idaho who had just returned from New Zealand and heard about the football league that had begun there.

"David caught my eye real fast," said Pella, now an assistant at Brigham Young University. "We were on one of the beaches having a barbecue. The guys were playing a little touch rugby when I looked up. Here comes this big monster running past everyone. I started thinking: this guy could just make it."

Pella helped Dixon, 6 feet 5, 360 pounds, get into Ricks College, a junior college in Rexburg, Idaho. From there, Dixon went to Arizona State as a defensive lineman.



The Browns gave Andre Rison big dollars to get him away from Atlanta, but the receiver got off to a slow start.

New England drafted him in the ninth round in 1992, but then cut him. He was signed to the Vikings practice squad, but then released by the team the following training camp. Dallas picked him up and put him on its practice squad, but also later cut him.

Dixon re-signed with the Vikings in 1994, and they converted him to an offensive lineman. He made his first start on Sept. 24 against the Pittsburgh Steelers, replacing injured **Chris Hinton** at right guard. Three Rivers Stadium was 8,514 miles from Dixon's home.

"David struggled to walk on the treadmill a couple of years ago," said Vikings offensive line coach **Keith Rowen**. "He's come a long way."

Dixon, a member of the Maori people who are native to New Zealand, hasn't forgotten his roots. He owns a few Maori calf-bone carvings that he wears around his neck.

"I love these things because they can be whatever you want them to be," he said.

Helping the enemy

Arizona Cardinals doctor **Russell Chick** wasn't conspiring to help the bad guys. He was just treating one of his patients.

But he was a big reason why Dallas Cowboys guard **Derek Kennard** returned from a brief retirement and made his debut against the Cardinals Sept. 24 at Texas Stadium.

Kennard retired in August after he felt some soreness in his left hip during a workout in training camp.

"I was in so much pain," said Kennard, who played for the Cardinals from 1986 to 1990. "I thought that was it. I didn't want to hinder my quality of life after football. I felt it was time to move on."

So Kennard, who had just signed a two-year, \$1.35 million contract two days earlier, returned home to Phoenix and went to see his orthopedist, Chick, who gave Kennard an anti-inflammatory drug that relieved much of his pain.

A few days later, Cowboys coaches and officials, concerned about a lack of depth in the offensive line, started calling Kennard to see how he was feeling, hoping to coax him out of retirement. Even owner **Jerry Jones** called.

Jones thought he would be successful, which is why he left Kennard on the team's active roster for the first three weeks of the season even though he wasn't in camp.

"Mr. Jones, being the great salesman that he is, talked to me about winning a Super Bowl ring, and that really tugged on me," Kennard said. "When Dr. Chick told me I was OK, that there wouldn't be a recurrence of pain and that it wouldn't affect my quality of life in the future, I decided to come back."

"I had made plenty of money. I was content. But I want that ring."

Hot seat

For years, the NFL office, inexplicably, wouldn't schedule Sunday afternoon home games in September in Arizona but did so in Miami and Tampa Bay.

Sam Wyche, coach of the Buccaneers, hopes that will change after the temperature was 115 degrees on the field at Tampa Stadium for the Washington Redskins game at Buccaneers on Sept. 24.

Tampa trainers went through 175 gallons of water, 15 cases of Gatorade and 1,800 pounds of ice, just on the Bucs' sideline.

It was so hot, Buccaneers linebacker **Lonnie Marts** went to the locker room in the second half and stayed.

"I was in there actually crying," Marts said. "I thought I was going to die. I've never felt that way before in my life. I was a big baby."

Short shots

Houston Oilers quarterback **Chris Chandler** would have had the best passing day in league history had he not spiked the ball at the end of the first half in the 38-28 victory over Cincinnati. Chandler hit 88.5 percent of his passes (23 of 26 for 352 yards and four touchdowns). The Browns' **Vinny Testaverde** owns the NFL passing-percentage mark of 91.3 percent (21 of 23 completions against the Rams in 1993). "Chris was so hot, I told him I was going to take him to Vegas, and when we get there, we're going straight to the crap tables," Oilers guard **Kevin Donnalley** said.

... Browns owner **Art Modell**, on Cowboys owner Jones, who has been sued by the NFL for \$300 million: "He's a hell of a salesman, very verbose. He gets tearful on cue. Reminds me of **Jimmy Swaggart**."

... Cardinals rookie quarterback **Stoney Case**, a third-round draft pick from New Mexico, has to be the only third-string quarterback with his own radio show. It's on AM 1450, the "Sports Animal," in Albuquerque, N.M.

MIAMI 26, CINCINNATI 23

Dolphins survive close call

By PAT McMANAMON
Digest Correspondent

CINCINNATI — The last-second field goal sailed wide by just a few feet.

Which was about as close as the Miami Dolphins and Cincinnati Bengals were on Sunday.

A catch here, a play there and a kick a few feet to the right and the Bengals and Dolphins would have been fighting it out in overtime. Instead, the Bengals left Riverfront Stadium hurt and angry, and Miami left talking about another one of those last-minute comeback drives engineered by Dan Marino.

"That was exciting," Coach Don Shula said of his team's 26-23 win.

Had to be. Miami's winning touchdown came with 1:03 left, but it wasn't secured until Doug Pelfrey hooked a 45-yard field goal try on the next-to-last play of the game.

Told the 26-23 win in front of 52,671 left Miami the only undefeated team in the league, Shula raised both fists to the cameras and yelled, "Hooray," then turned and walked away.

He quickly quieted, though, when asked about the conversation he and his son Dave, the Bengals coach, had at midfield. The pair wished each other luck, and Dave said he hoped his dad would continue undefeated. But two hugs, the second a warm, quiet embrace, showed that the win had its difficult elements.

"It was about as tough a loss as you could have," Don Shula said. "It looked like he had everything going for him. To be denied the overtime, I'm sure it was a tough one for him to handle."

Miami's fourth win in four games featured a vintage Marino performance. The Dolphins quarterback

finished with 450 yards passing (the fourth-best individual performance in Dolphins history, and the second-best against the Bengals) and the 30th fourth-quarter comeback of his career.

But Cincinnati's Jeff Blake and Carl Pickens almost outdid him. Pickens had nine catches, 117 yards and three touchdowns. Blake threw for 201 yards and put Pelfrey in position to tie the game.

It was a teeter-totter kind of day, one of those you-score, we-score games highlighted by Miami's final

drive, which started, after a penalty, at Miami's 9-yard line with 3:31 left. Miami ran 10 plays, all passes out of the shotgun. Marino completed eight for 76 yards.

The last came on a first-and-10 from Cincinnati's 16, when Marino hit O.J. McDuffie for the game-winning score.

Blake came back and completed 2 of 5 passes to move the Bengals to the Dolphins 27. Punter Lee Johnson, the holder, said Pelfrey made the cardinal sin of kickers.

"He turned out of it," Johnson

said. "He looked up."

It was quite an ending to quite a game.

Pete Stoyanovich's 35-yard field goal — Stoyanovich went 4-for-4 — gave Miami a 19-17 lead with 10:03 left, but the Bengals and Blake and Pickens came right back.

A 71-yard drive ended with Blake hitting Pickens on a slant in front of Troy Vincent for a 10-yard score and a 23-19 lead.

Dave Shula opted to go for two — he said he wanted Miami to have to kick two field goals to tie — but Vincent broke up the pass to Darnay Scott.

With three timeouts and more than three minutes left, Miami knew it had plenty of time — especially with Marino.

On first down, Marino was almost sacked by Todd Kelly, but as Kelly spun him by the legs at the goal line, Marino barely shot-putted a pass in the direction of McDuffie. The Bengals complained, seeking a safety or grounding, but got no call.

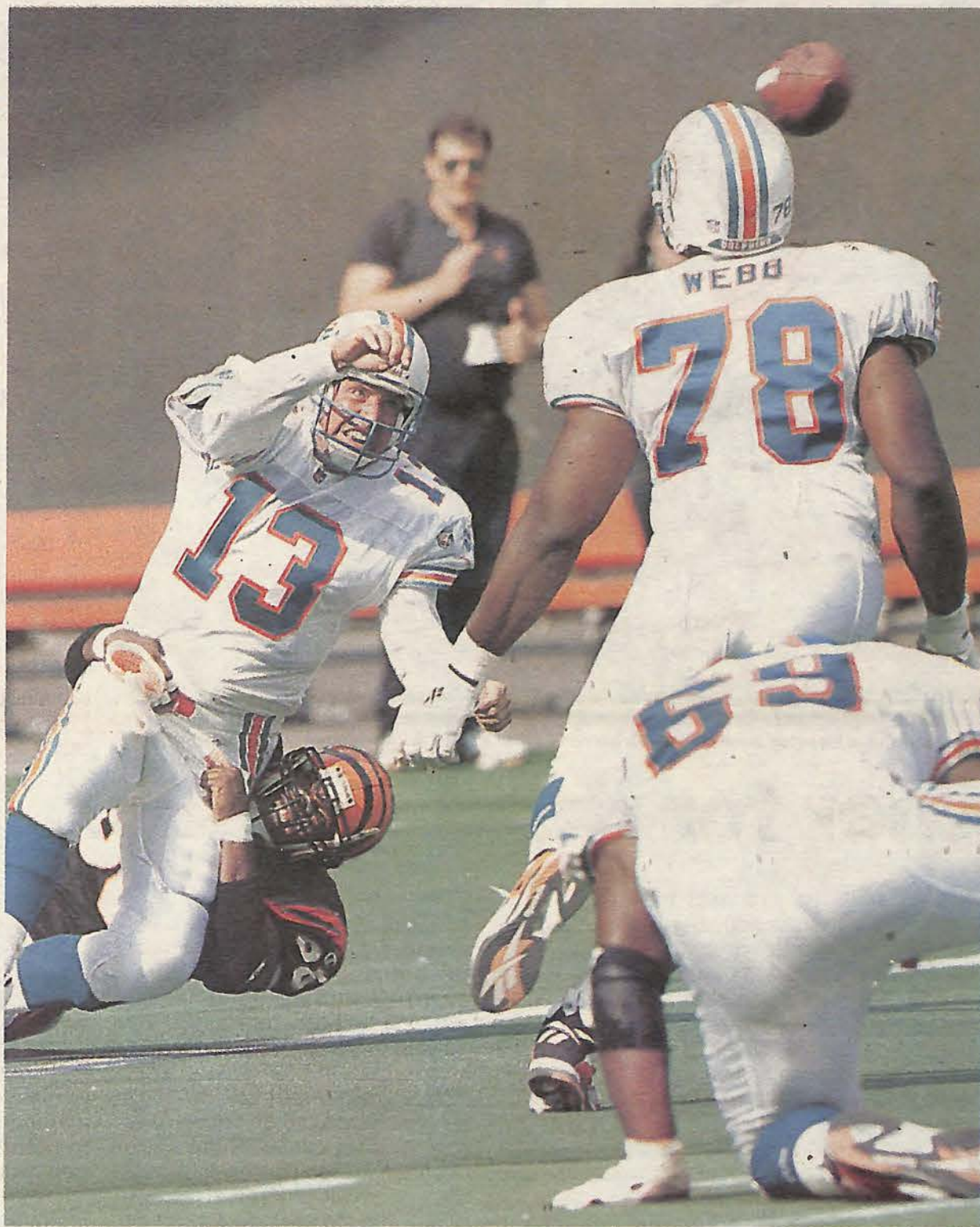
"From where I was standing, it was grounding," Bengals end John Copeland said. "There was no receiver who really had a chance to catch it."

Two plays later, Marino hit McDuffie for 5 yards on third-and-2, and another 15 were added when Roger Jones grabbed the back of McDuffie's helmet and twisted it.

Marino then found Gary Clark for 12, and Hill for 13. Just before the two-minute warning, McDuffie caught another pass for 10. Kirby caught another for 9, then took a shovel pass for 3 more on third-and-1, setting up the game-winner.

To a man, Dolphins players shrugged at the last drive.

Said guard Keith Sims, "We've been through it before."



The Bengals thought they might have had a victory wrapped up when Todd Kelly got to Dan Marino at the goal line late in the fourth quarter, but Marino got rid of the ball in time and then proceeded to guide the Dolphins on a game-winning drive.

Digest Photo/KEN KEIDEL



Running back Harold Green was able to run loose last Sunday as the Dolphins had their worst defensive showing of the season.

Digest Photo/KEN KEIDEL

A downer for the defense

By Pat McMANAMON
Digest Correspondent

CINCINNATI — Even with the 26-23 win on Sunday, there were some gloomy Miami Dolphins.

Among the gloomiest: linebacker Bryan Cox, who described his play with typical candor: "I played like a junior high schooler."

Cox probably was being too hard on himself, but the Bengals did have success against the Dolphins defense — especially on the ground.

The Bengals totaled 144 yards rushing, by far the highest total against the Dolphins defense this season. The Bengals started the game as the NFL's 24th-best running team, but averaged 6.0 yards per rush, as Harold Green gained 71 yards and Eric Bieniemy 50.

Also marring the effort were five offside penalties on the Dolphins defense, which defense coach Tom Olivadotti called inexcusable.

The Dolphins, in fact, set

team records for ineptitude as far as penalties, with 14 for 143 yards.

"It was kind of a sloppy day for us on both sides of the ball," defensive end Trace Armstrong said. "We had mistakes and the penalties on top of it, but we still found a way to win."

The Dolphins also were not happy about their running game — Miami totaled 48 yards on 20 carries, a 2.4 yard average. In two weeks, Miami has rushed for 46 yards against Pittsburgh and 48 against Cincinnati.

"It does matter," offensive tackle Richmond Webb said. "But I think if we had scored a couple of touchdowns instead of kicking field goals early in the game, then we would have run the ball more."

Webb added one other factor that influenced the play-calling: Marino was having one of those games. He finished 33-of-48 for 450 yards.

Don Shula admitted he did not want to take the ball out of

Marino's hands.

"There are going to be games where Dan has to throw 50 times and we're going to win," guard Keith Sims said. "This was one of those games. We're 4-0 and that's all that matters."

When a quarterback throws for 450 yards, some receivers will have big games. Tight end Eric Green, running back Terry Kirby and wide receiver Gary Clark were the leaders of a gang of seven who caught passes.

Clark had six receptions for 79 yards, twice as many catches as he had in the first three games. Kirby caught seven passes, gaining 89 yards, and Green had a breakout game.

His seven receptions for 91 yards included a touchdown, and matched the total he had going into the game.

Randal Hill even came out of mothballs to catch his first two passes of the season. The first was for 58 yards, as Hill played for the first time since the season opener.

McDuffie makes the big catch

CINCINNATI — O.J. McDuffie's first thought was that the pass might be intercepted by Cincinnati cornerback Roger Jones.

"I was making sure it wasn't a pick," McDuffie said.

To do that, McDuffie jumped inside of Jones at the goal line with 1:03 left in Sunday's game and Miami losing by four. That jump — and that play — turned a potential interception into the game-winning touchdown of Miami's 26-23 win over the Bengals on Sunday.

"Danny put it in a spot where I could go after it," McDuffie said of Dan Marino's pass to the front left corner of the end zone.

"My first thought was to make sure (Jones) didn't get it," McDuffie said. "But he didn't go after it. When he didn't, his momentum carried him past the ball a little bit and I went up and got it."

With just 1:03 left.

"It feels real good," McDuffie said, the calm in his voice covering the excitement of his first game-winning catch as a Dolphin. "It's a big win for us."

McDuffie wasn't Marino's first option on the play, which called for a quick slant. But McDuffie had single coverage and when Marino saw that and Jones' back, he went for the score — and the win.

"The defensive back had his back turned to me, and I figured O.J. would have a chance to make that play," Marino said. "So I gave him a chance and he came up with it."

McDuffie credited backup quarterback Bernie Kosar with an assist.

Two series prior to the game-winning drive, McDuffie and Kosar had talked on the sideline about plays that might work. They figured the out-and-up would be one, and both told Marino.

Everyone figured Jones would go for the out.

"This time he didn't," McDuffie said. "He actually played the up move."

But Marino knows his receivers, and all anyone needs to know regarding his feelings about McDuffie are that Marino calls him a play-maker.

Which is what McDuffie did on the pass.

"O.J. has the ability to jump over people to make catches, to make one-handed grabs," Marino said. "Whatever it takes."

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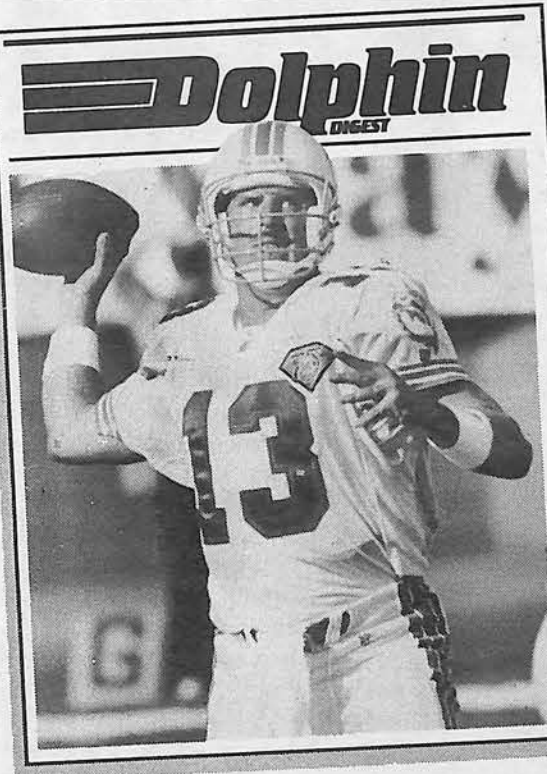
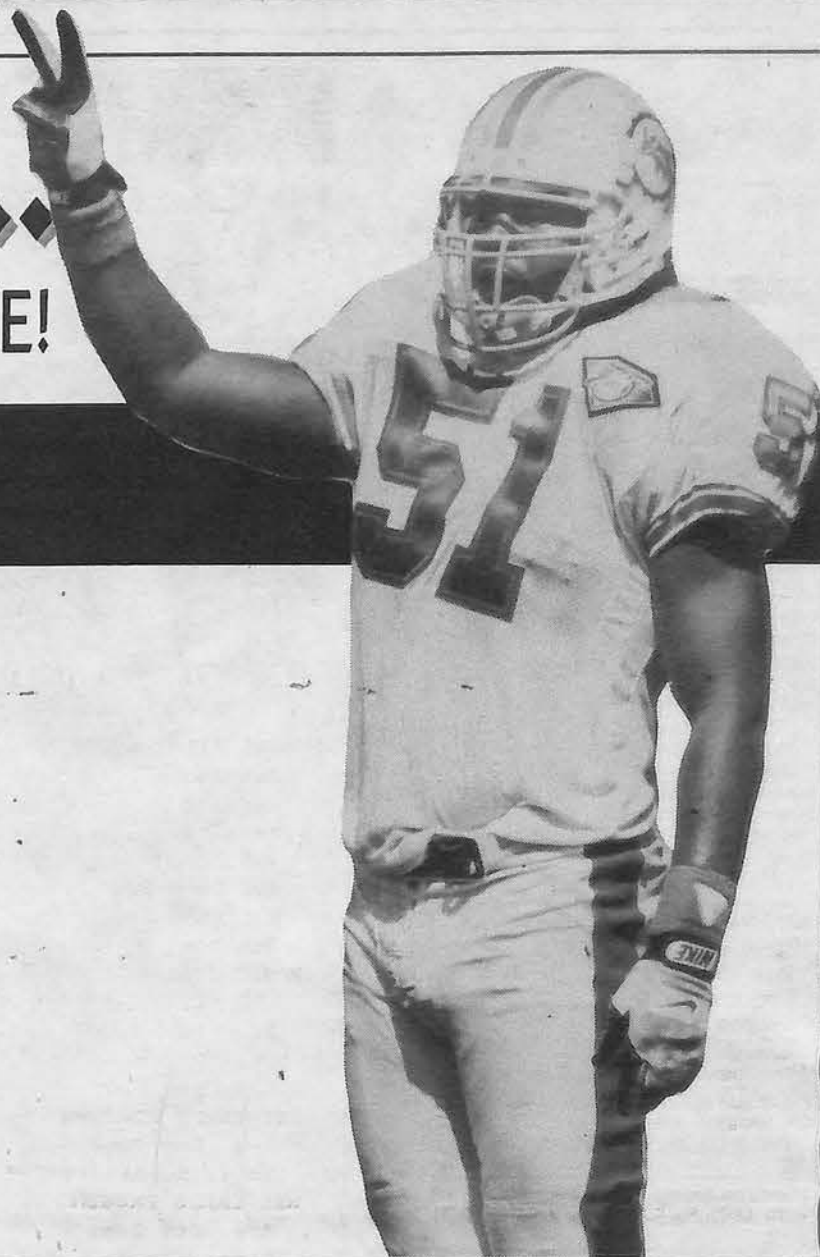
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Game Summary

Miami 3 10 3 10 — 26
Cincinnati 0 10 7 6 — 23

TEAM STATISTICS

	MIA	CIN
FIRST DOWNS	27	23
Rushing	3	8
Passing	23	11
Penalty	1	4
3RD-DOWN EFFICIENCY	7-13	5-11
4TH-DOWN EFFICIENCY	0-0	0-0
TOTAL NET YARDS	490	342
Total plays	69	60
Average gain	7.1	5.7
NET YARDS RUSHING	48	144
Rushes	20	24
Average per rush	2.4	6.0
NET YARDS PASSING	442	198
Completed-attempted	33-48	18-35
Yards per pass	9.0	5.5
Sacked-yards lost	1-8	1-3
Had intercepted	1	0
PUNTS-AVERAGE	2-48.5	5-45.4
RETURN YARDAGE	87	127
Punts-returns	3-17	0-0
Kickoffs-returns	4-70	6-124
Interceptions-returns	0-0	1-3
PENALTIES-YARDS	14-143	5-40
FUMBLES-LOST	0-0	0-0
TIME OF POSSESSION	32:27	27:33

PLAYER STATISTICS

Missed field goals: Cincinnati (Pelfrey 45).

Miami rushing: Kirby 9-28, Parmalee 6-22, Spikes 3-0, Marino 2-(-2).

Cincinnati rushing: Green 15-71, Bieniemy 6-50, Cothran 2-18, Blake 1-5.

Miami passing: Marino 33-48 for 450 yards, 1 INT, 2 TD.

Cincinnati passing: Blake 18-34 for 201 yards, 0 INT, 3 TD; Bieniemy 0-1 for 0 yards, 0 INT, 0 TD.

Miami receiving: Green 7-91, Kirby 7-89, Clark 6-79, McDuffie 5-54, Fryar 4-54, Hill 2-71, Byars 2-12.

Cincinnati receiving: Pickens 9-117, Green 3-10, McGee 2-43, Bieniemy 1-15, Scott 1-8, Joseph 1-5, Cothran 1-3.

Miami tackles-assists-sacks (unofficial): Hollier 7-0-0, Vincent 7-0-0, Cox 4-1-0, Atkins 3-1-0, Armstrong 3-0-1, Beavers 3-0-0, Brown 3-0-0, Cross 3-0-0, Klingbeil 3-0-0, Singleton 1-2-0, Bowens 2-0-0, Buckley 1-0-0, Dotson 2-0-0, Heller 1-0-0, Hill 1-0-0, Johnson 1-0-0, Smith 1-0-0, Wilson 1-0-0.

Cincinnati tackles-assists-sacks (unofficial): Walker 7-2-0, Francis 5-2-0, Williams 6-0-0, To-var 5-1-0, Shelling 6-0-0, Wheeler 4-2-0, Jones 5-0-0, Collins 3-1-0, Smith 3-0-0, McDonald 2-1-0, Copeland 2-0-1, Rucker 2-0-0, Stallings 1-0-0, Wilkinson 1-0-0, Bieniemy 0-1-0, Jefferson 2-0-0, Joseph 2-0-0, Shade 0-1-0.

Turnovers — Interceptions: Cincinnati (Collins 1 for 3 yards). Fumbles: None. Opponent's fumbles recovered: None.

Officials: Referee-Mcelwee, Umpire-Quirk, Head linesman-Veteri, Line judge-Boston, Back judge-Richard, Side judge-Corrente, Field judge-Carollo.

A: 52,671; No-shows: 3,777; T: 3:04.

DOLPHINS STATISTICS

WON 4, LOST 0

09/03 W 52-14	New York Jets	71,317
09/10 W 20-3	at New England	60,239
09/18 W 23-10	Pittsburgh	72,874
10/01 W 26-23	at Cincinnati	52,671
10/08	Indianapolis	
10/15	at New Orleans	
10/22	at New York Jets	
10/29	Buffalo	
11/05	at San Diego	
11/12	New England	
11/20	San Francisco	
11/26	at Indianapolis	
12/03	Atlanta	
12/11	Kansas City	
12/17	at Buffalo	
12/24	at St. Louis	

	Miami	Opp.
TOTAL FIRST DOWNS	86	79
Rushing	22	22
Passing	56	52
Penalty	8	5
3rd Down: Made/Att	18/46	17/53
3rd Down Pct.	39.1	32.1
4th Down: Made/Att	1/1	4/10
4th Down Pct.	100.0	40.0
POSSESSION AVG.	31:15	28:46
TOTAL NET YARDS	1514	1259
Avg. Per Game	378.5	314.8
Total Plays	247	274
Avg. Per Play	6.1	4.6
NET YARDS RUSHING	387	340
Avg. Per Game	96.8	85.0
Total Rushes	111	84
NET YARDS PASSING	1127	919
Avg. Per Game	281.8	229.8
Sacked/Yards Lost	5/30	8/65
Gross Yards	1157	984
Att./Completions	131/86	182/95
Completion Pct.	65.6	52.2
Had Intercepted	4	9
PUNTS/AVERAGE	15/43.2	19/40.1
NET PUNTING AVG.	15/35.6	19/33.0
PENALTIES/YARDS	35/296	32/282
FUMBLES/BALL LOST	9/4	6/5
TOUCHDOWNS	13	6
Rushing	4	0
Passing	8	5
Returns	1	1

* SCORE BY PERIODS	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	OT	PTS
DOLPHINS	16	52	27	26	0	121
OPPONENTS	0	30	7	13	0	50

* SCORING	TD-Ru-Pa-Rt	K-PAT	FG	S	PTS
Stoyanovich	0 0 0 0	13/13	10/12	0	43
Fryar	4 0 4 0			0	24
Parmalee	3 3 0 0			0	18
Byars	1 0 1 0			0	6
Green	1 0 1 0			0	6
Kirby	1 0 1 0			0	6
McDuffie	1 0 1 0			0	6
Spikes	1 1 0 0			0	6
Vincent	1 0 0 1			0	6
DOLPHINS	13 4 8 1	13/13	10/12	0	121
OPPONENTS	6 0 5 1	5/5	3/5	0	50
2-Pt. Conversions: TEAM 0-0, OPPONENTS 0-1					
SACKS: Cox 2.5, Armstrong 1.5, Coleman 1.5, Bowens 1.0, Singleton 1.0, Foxx 0.5, DOLPHINS 8.0, OPPONENTS 5.0					

* PASSING	Att	Cmp	Yds	Cmp%	Yds/Att	TD	TD%	Int	Int%	Long	Sack	Lost	Rating
Marino	121	79	1076	65.3	8.89	7	5.8	4	3.3	67t	4/	29	99.1
Kosar	9	6	50	66.7	5.56	0	0.0	0	0.0	12	1/	1	80.8
Kirby	1	1	31	100.0	31.00	1	100.0	0	0.0	31t	0/	0	158.3
DOLPHINS	131	86	1157	65.6	8.83	8	6.1	4	3.1	67t	5/	30	101.2
OPPONENTS	182	95	984	52.2	5.41	5	2.7	9	4.9	44t	8/	65	56.7

* RUSHING	No.	Yds	Avg	Long	TD			
Parmalee	45	159	3.5	24t	3			
Kirby	37	148	4.0	38	0			
Spikes	21	78	3.7	17t	1			
Kosar	4	4	1.0	7	0			
Byars	1	1	1.0	1	0			
Marino	3	-3	-1.0	-1	0			
DOLPHINS	111	387	3.5	38	4			
OPPONENTS	84	340	4.0	22	0			
* RECEIVING	No.	Yds	Avg	Long	TD			
Kirby	17	190	11.2	46	1			
Fryar	16	312	19.5	67t	4			
Green	14	166	11.9	20	1			
McDuffie	12	154	12.8	35	1			
Clark	9	135	15.0	24	0			
Byars	9	74	8.2	24	1			
Parmalee	4	37	9.3	15	0			
R. Hill	2	71	35.5	58	0			
M. Williams	1	15	15.0	15	0			
Wilson	1	3	3.0	3	0			
Spikes	1	0	0.0	0	0			
DOLPHINS	86	1157	13.5	67t	8			
OPPONENTS	95	984	10.4	44t	5			
* INTERCEPTIONS	No.	Yds	Avg	Long	TD			
Vincent	3	73	24.3	69t	1			
Brown	2	20	10.0	20	0			
Cox	1	12	12.0	12	0			
Beavers	1	8	8.0	8	0			
Atkins	1	0	0.0	0	0			
Stewart	1	0	0.0	0	0			
DOLPHINS	9	113	12.6	69t	1			
OPPONENTS	4	16	4.0	13	0			
* PUNTING	No.	Yds	Avg	Net	TB	In	Lq	B
Kidd	15	648	43.2	35.6	3	2	56	0
DOLPHINS	15	648	43.2	35.6	3	2	56	0
OPPONENTS	19	761	40.1	33.0	3	3	51	0
* PUNT RETURNS	Ret	FC	Yds	Avg	Long	TD		
McDuffie	9	3	74	8.2	24	0		
DOLPHINS	9	3	74	8.2	24	0		
OPPONENTS	7	3	54	7.7	13	0		
* KICKOFF RETURNS	No.	Yds	Avg	Long	TD			
McDuffie	5	125	25.0	33	0			
Spikes	5	99	19.8	28	0			
Buckley	1	16	16.0	16	0			
Milner	1	13	13.0	13	0			
DOLPHINS	12	253	21.1	33	0			
OPPONENTS	25	478	19.1	32	0			
* FIELD GOALS	1-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50+			
Stoyanovich	1/ 1	4/ 4	4/ 4	1/ 1	0/2			
DOLPHINS	1/ 1	4/ 4	4/ 4	1/ 1	0/2			
OPPONENTS	0/ 0	2/ 2	0/ 0	1/ 2	0/1			
Stoyanovich: (25G) (22G, 54B, 19G) (37G, 39G, 52N, 21G) (21G, 46G, 36G, 35G)								
OPPONENTS: (51N) (29G) (40G) (28G, 45N)								



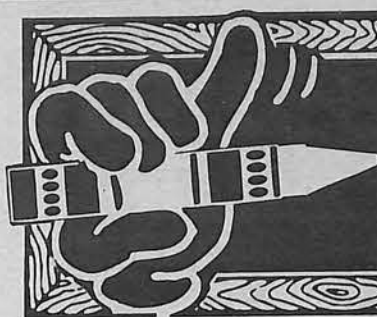
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Game No. 4 • Miami 26, Cincinnati 23

QUARTERBACK

The Dolphins needed every one of Dan Marino's yards through the air to beat the Bengals. He threw for 450 yards on 33 completions and had two touchdowns. His 16-yard end zone strike with just over a minute left allowed the Dolphins to survive the Bengals' upset attempt. He completed eight straight passes on the final drive, which started at the 9-yard line with 3:39 left. Marino had one pass intercepted, which should have been caught by Gary Clark, and was sacked only once. **Grade: A**

RUNNING BACKS

The Bengals were intent upon stopping the run, at the expense of leaving some gaping holes in their pass defense. Terry Kirby, Bernie Parmalee and Irving Spikes were tried as ball carriers and all failed. The longest Miami running play was 7 yards and the 2.4 average per attempt was 1.3 yards under the season average. The three running backs totaled just 48 yards on 20 attempts against the Bengals. The inability to run the football was a major negative in the close win. **Grade: D**

RECEIVERS

Coming into this game, Eric Green and Gary Clark had combined for 10 receptions for 131 yards. In Cincinnati, the two had 13 catches for 170 yards. Green was effective in the middle of the Bengals' zone defense, catching seven passes for 91 yards and his first touchdown as a Dolphin. He dropped two passes, but made enough excellent grabs to make up for them. Clark showed his toughness across the middle and made several catches between two Bengals defenders. Randal Hill was active for the first time since the opener and his 58-yard catch in

the first quarter was the longest play of the game. The Bengals zoned to Irving Fryar's side much of the day and he had a quiet four catches for 54 yards. O.J. McDuffie came through on the final drive, making three of his five receptions for 31 yards and scoring the winning touchdown. Kirby was effective out of the backfield, catching seven passes for 89 yards. His 46-yard catch and run was the big play of the second-quarter touchdown drive. **Grade: A-**

OFFENSIVE LINE

The Dolphins had 14 penalties against the Bengals and five were by the offensive line. Richmond Webb and Tim Ruddy were each flagged for holding and there were three motion penalties. The pass protection was excellent, except for Keith Sims being beaten for a sack and Webb for a hurry on a key third-down play. Marino had plenty of time to throw but the same effort was not given to opening holes for the running backs. **Grade: B-**

DEFENSIVE LINE

Tim Bowens started out like he was going to take the Bengals on himself. On the first two Cincinnati possessions, he made two tackles, knocked down a third-down pass, and pressured Jeff Blake on another. However, he was not credited with anything else, except two off-side penalties. The Bengals rushed for 144 yards on a Miami defense that had been giving up 63 a game. Marco Coleman and Steve Emtman did not make any tackles and the other four who played combined for 11. Trace Armstrong had the lone Miami sack, as Blake had enough time to complete 18 of 34 for 201 yards and three touchdowns. The first line of defense did not win its confrontation with the Cincinnati offensive line. **Grade: C**

LINEBACKERS

It did not get any better in the second line of defense. Bryan Cox and Chris Singleton had their worst day of the year in Cincinnati. Cox missed several tackles and did not stop the inside running of the Bengals, who averaged 6 yards per rushing attempt. Singleton was caught inside on more than one outside running play and had just one initial hit. Cox was in on a season-low five tackles. Dwight Hollier had a solid game, leading the team in tackles with seven and containing the run to his side. Aubrey Beavers had a pass interference penalty and three tackles. **Grade: D**

DEFENSIVE BACKS

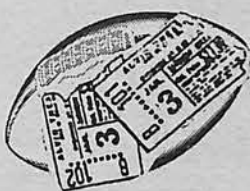
The deep backs did not play as poorly as the linebackers but must get some of the blame for the Bengals scoring 23 points and throwing three TD passes. Troy Vincent had a difficult time with Carl Pickens, who scored all three Cincy touchdowns and had 117 yards on nine catches. Vincent had seven tackles but many were after Pickens receptions. J.B. Brown had a pass interference penalty and three tackles. The safeties were not as busy, as most Bengals throws were to the outside. Gene Atkins was in on four tackles and Michael Stewart zero. **Grade: C-**

SPECIAL TEAMS

There were no long returns by either team and the Miami coverage teams did an excellent job. Dewayne Dotson and Sean Hill continue to be Miami's best players on the coverage teams, as they combined for three tackles. Pete Stoyanovich was perfect on four field goal attempts and four of his seven kickoffs went to the end zone. John Kidd punted only twice and was fortunate to average 48.5 per attempt. **Grade: A**

— Tom Curtis

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DOLPHIN DIGEST PLAYER OF THE WEEK

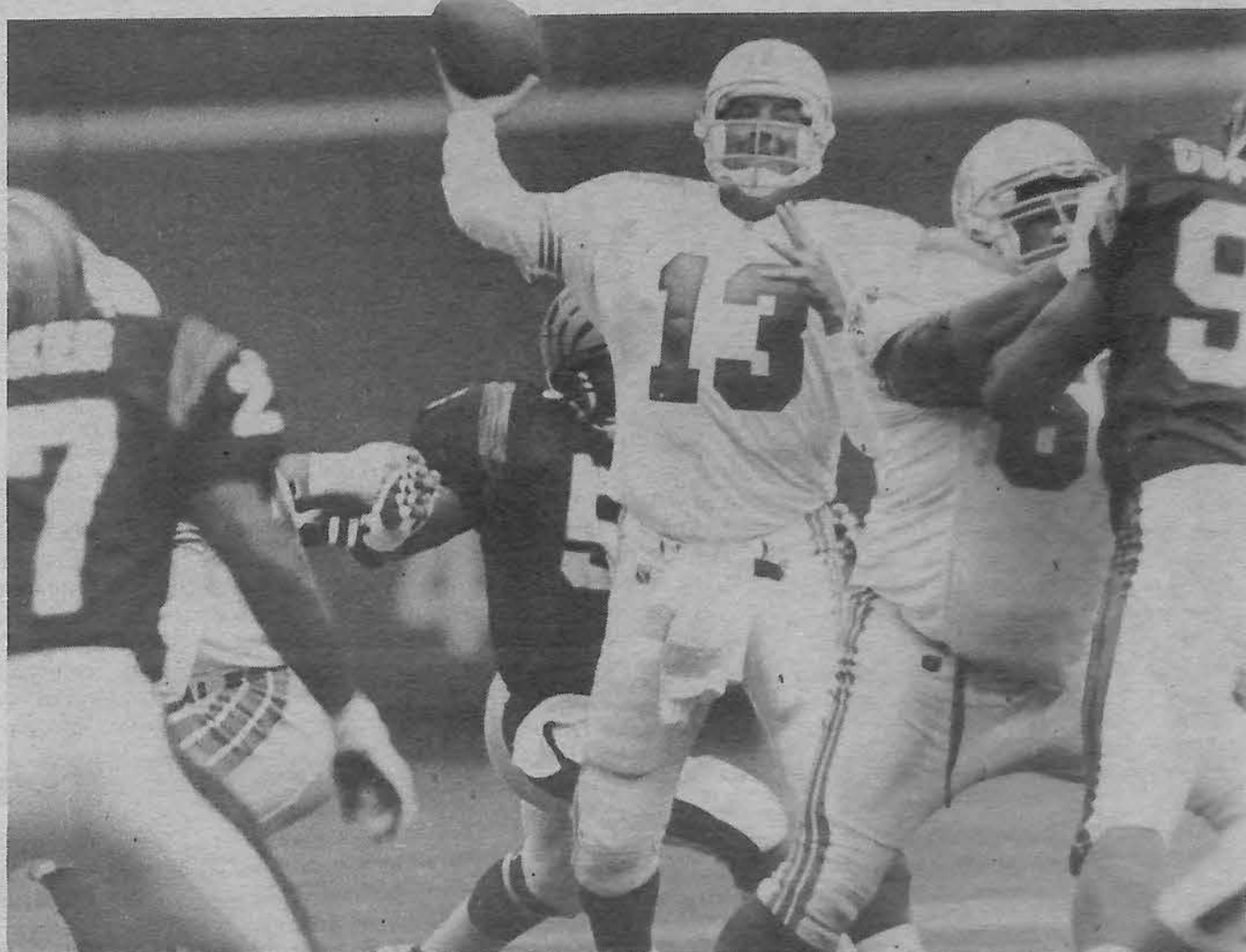
DAN MARINO

QUARTERBACK

Quarterback Dan Marino is the *Dolphin Digest* Player of the Week for his performance in last Sunday's 26-23 victory over the Cincinnati Bengals.

Marino passed for 450 yards — the fourth-highest yardage total in his career — and two touchdowns, including the game-winner to O.J. McDuffie with just over a minute left.

Also considered for Player of the Week honors were kicker Pete Stoyanovich, who booted four field goals; and tight end Eric Green, who had seven catches.



Digest Photo/KEN KEIDEL



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DOLPHIN DATA

Marino deal
in the works

Marvin Demoff, the agent for **Dan Marino**, was expected to be in South Florida this week to meet with Dolphins officials.

For about a month, the Dolphins have been talking about a contract extension for Marino that would enable the team's quarterback to finish his career in Miami.

Marino's present deal expires after the 1996 season.

The extension would involve a restructuring of Marino's contract and would give the Dolphins some salary cap room, which would enable them to sign potential free agents like **Troy Vincent**, **Keith Sims** and **Bryan Cox**.

TROY'S BOY: Speaking of Vincent, his wife Tommi gave birth to the couple's first child last week, a 6-pound, 14-ounce boy named Troy Jr.

MAIN MEN: The Dolphins will announce their NFL Man of the Year award nominee at a luncheon Oct. 10 at the Fort Lauderdale Airport Hilton. The Dolphins' three finalists are **Pete Stoyanovich**, **Bryan Cox** and **Irving Fryar**. The event, sponsored by True Value, the Dolphins and the Davie/Cooper City Chamber of Commerce, begins at 11:30 a.m. For ticket information, call 305-581-0790.

EX-DOLPHINS FILE: Former Dolphins running back **Aaron Craver** has impressed his new coaches in Denver enough that he was given a



Marino



Craver



Cox



Green

starting assignment last Sunday at Seattle. Craver carried once for 3 yards in Denver's 27-10 loss and caught five passes for 32 yards.

LEGAL FILE: The wives of five current or former Dolphins have been sued by a California woman claiming she was assaulted following the playoff loss at San Diego last January. Named as defendants were **Jacqueline Fryar**, **LaTonia Cox**, **Angel Parmalee**, **Shondra Ingram** and **Melanie Jackson**. Fryar and

Cox have filed a countersuit and the matter has been sent out for non-binding arbitration.

KICKING MOVE: As expected, the Dolphins signed kicker **Joe Nedney** to the practice squad. The left-footed Nedney, a rookie free agent from San Jose State who once won a game with a 60-yard field goal as time expired, was expected to take over the kickoff chores before too long, but that idea might be dropped after **Pete Stoyanovich** reached the

end zone on four of his seven kick-offs last Sunday.

STAT STORY: The Dolphins improved to 7-0 following bye weeks. ... Miami extended its winning streak over Cincinnati to eight games. ... Tight end **Eric Green** matched his season total with seven catches against the Bengals.

L.A.'S TEAM: After watching the city's two teams leave this season, Los Angeles radio station KABC took a poll of its listeners to pick a new team to adopt and the overwhelming choice was the Dolphins. Miami got 78 votes, compared to 32 for runner-up New England. "They're our Miami Dolphins," said KABC sports talk show host **Eric Tracy**, "and we're as excited to have them as you folks down there." Of course, it didn't hurt that Dolphins general manager **Eddie Jones** offered KABC hosts and listeners the use of a luxury suite for the Nov. 20 Monday night game against San Francisco.

NO SWEAT: For fullback **Keith Byars**, getting the ball with 3:39 left and three timeouts down by four against Cincinnati was almost a piece of cake. "In practice," said Byars, "we pretend we have one timeout and there's only a minute left."

INACTIVE INFO: Wide receiver **Randal Hill** participated in the game against the Bengals, but **Ricky Sanders** once again was on the inactive list. Joining him were **Dan McGwire**, **Dion Foxx**, **Calvin Jackson**, **Andrew Greene**, **Norman Hand**, **Tom McHale** and **Ed Hawthorne**.

Marino record chase update

Quarterback Dan Marino should break the first of Fran Tarkenton's four major career passing records Sunday at Joe Robbie Stadium against Indianapolis. Marino needs four completions to become the all-time leader in that category. What follows is a look at Marino's chase of the major records with a target date for each one, using Marino's 1995 pace.

Statistic	Marino	Tarkenton	Target date
Completions	3,683	3,686	Oct. 8, 1995
Passing yards	46,249	47,003	Oct. 22, 1995
Touchdown passes	335	342	Oct. 29, 1995
Pass attempts	6,170	6,467	Dec. 11, 1995

Injury Update ...

The Dolphins' great start continues, both on the field and in the injury department.

Several players suffered injuries against the Bengals, but no one is expected to be kept out of Sunday's game against the Colts.

Guard **Keith Sims** suffered a pinched nerve during practice early in the week, but the injury wasn't serious. Sims then suffered a turf toe during the game against Cincinnati, which forced him to miss some plays before he returned to the game.

Linebacker **Chris Singleton**, for his part, sprained his right ankle. It is not the same ankle Singleton had surgery on in the offseason.

Defensive end **Trace Armstrong** suffered a knee sprain, while tight end **Eric Green** suffered a contusion on the same shoulder that bothered him during training camp.

It was determined last week that **Bernie Kosar** suffered a broken index finger on his left hand in the season opener against the Jets.

Kosar was scheduled to undergo surgery, when doctors decided it wasn't necessary. The finger was placed in a soft, protective wrap and Kosar said he would have no problems playing if needed.

Dan McGwire missed some practice time because of a sprained ankle and he was listed as questionable heading into the Cincinnati game — he was inactive for the game.

Where are they now?
... LORENZO HAMPTON

Coach Hampton is starting to have a nice ring to it. And that's something Lorenzo Hampton never thought he would say.

Years after saying there was absolutely no way he would get into coaching, Hampton is doing just that at Boca Raton Spanish River, where he's teaching the team's running backs.

"My ultimate goal is to be a head coach, but that's way down the road," Hampton told the *Fort Lauderdale Sun-Sentinel*. "I want to take this year and the next two or three years to see if my heart is really in it. I'm the type of person that if I'm going to go into something, I'm going to go into it heart, soul and mind. I have to make sure that I'm going to be able to give these kids 110 percent of me, and if I'm not able to do that, I can't be involved with it."

Hampton, the Dolphins' No. 1 pick in 1985, spent five years in Miami before spending some time with Denver and Dallas. Even though he hasn't played since 1992, Hampton has been getting some calls from the Jacksonville Jaguars. So far, no interest.

"I was fortunate enough to come away from the game healthy," he said. "I've got my pension, I've made my dollars. I don't know if I want to get up and leave again. I don't know if I have that drive anymore."

Nobody's perfect for '72 team

Nobody goes undefeated. The '72 guys made sure of it. Each year, they put a bottle of bubbly on ice and when the last team falls, they toast their accomplishment. Now, they have to wait for their own coach to stumble 23 years later.



**HANK
GOLDBERG**
WQAM RADIO

Guys, this is not to scare you, but your offensive line coach, Monte Clark, is back.

Even today, the presence of the No-Names is powerful. Once every few years, a team rises up to challenge 17-0. Yep, back in '84 it was Don Shula, again, cruising 11-0 into San Diego. That was the Sunday morning the a.m. paper chose to compare that version, man-for-man, with the *el perfectos*.

It's like being on a gambling roll. As the late Pete Axthelm put it, "you don't taunt the goddess of wagering." The Fins lost to the Chargers in overtime, 34-28. So much for comparisons.

Then, there was the time (1985) when Chicago showed up for a Monday nighter in the Orange Bowl sporting a 12-0 mark. On the sidelines were Zonk, Kooch, Nick, practically the whole gang. It was to be the Bears' only loss that year, 38-24.

This was a busy week for those '72 rascals. Monday night, they started in Detroit where the winless Lions shocked San Francisco. Sunday, they had to focus on a few sites.

They saw the Colts come to life to hold off the Rams, who taunted the goddess by implying that they could be unblemished in a couple of weeks to face the Niners. Whisper: 21-18.

And, in a shocker, they somehow



Larry Csonka (l.), Nick Buoniconti, Dick Anderson and the rest of the 1972 Dolphins are very protective when it comes to being the only perfect team in NFL history.

Digest Photo/KEN KEIDEL

got the Washington franchise to step back to their own era when beating Dallas was everything. They probably got some help from Billy Kilmer and the ol' shine on this one as they took the Cowboys out of the unbeaten category, 27-23.

But the ultimate piece of chicanery would have befallen the old man. Somehow, they got to his kid, imploring him to remember those days when he was handing towels out to them. You know, back in '72. Dave Shula almost pulled it off. Somebody forgot to include the kicker and the zebras in the plot. Don escapes unscathed, 26-23. And who knows better than him that the best team ever will be lurk-

ing the rest of the way?

... Now that the Raiders are back in Oakland, who is the best team in the Bay area?

... Does the AFC now boast the two best teams? Don't Dallas and San Francisco have to pick it up to close the gap between them and Miami and Oakland?

... Pittsburgh's Neil O'Donnell and Washington's Heath Shuler should be ready this week, but both of their teams are coming off big wins. O'Donnell will get his job back, but what are the Redskins to do with Shuler, the high-priced one, the way Gus Frerotte is going?

... As Dan Marino closes in on

what's left of Fran Tarkenton's records, it should be noted that he leads active quarterbacks with 15 Monday night wins. Jim Kelly and Dave Krieg are next with 10.

... Isn't it time we started paying more respect to Kansas City. Here's another tidbit. Marty Schottenheimer is the only coach to have his team in the playoffs in every season of the '90s.

... When the weekly stats come out, check out Buddy Ryan's Arizona defense. Entering this past weekend, they were last against the run and 28th, which was last before expansion teams, overall. The Chiefs added 221 yards, including 76 on one carry by quarterback Steve Bono. Incidentally, Buddy Ball still means no offense. The Cards are 27th in that category.

... Lookie here! Minnesota is 9-0 coming off byes since 1992 and they have Houston this week. Why are the Vikes running so well? The right side of their offensive line has Korey Stringer (340 pounds) and David Dixon (360 pounds) and that adds up to 700, folks.

... While we're in a stats mode, the Rams had 11 sacks in their first three games. Then, Sean Gilbert, their best defender was injured and they are still at 11 sacks.

... It didn't take long for Chris Chandler to go back to being Chris Chandler, or the Rams to being the Rams or Pittsburgh to bounce back. And Denver still can't stop the run after all these years and free agent signings. But where are all of those who had New England in the Super Bowl?

... Dennis Erickson looks great from afar on television and wouldn't you look great if you didn't have to coach this UM bunch, which is an 18-point dog to FSU?

★ Dan Marino Commemorative Pin #2 from Steelers game - \$15 ★ Dolphins Checkbook cover - \$5 ★ Dolphins vs. Steelers program 9/18/95 - \$10
★ Dan Marino limited edition serigraph football '95 issue - \$100 ★ Riddell Mini Helmet - \$25 ★ Mini helmet cube - \$12 ★ Sammy Smith game used jersey (autographed) - \$300 ★ Dan Marino Super Bowl party card - very limited - \$150
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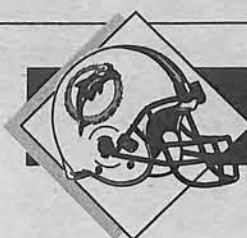
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Miami Dolphins

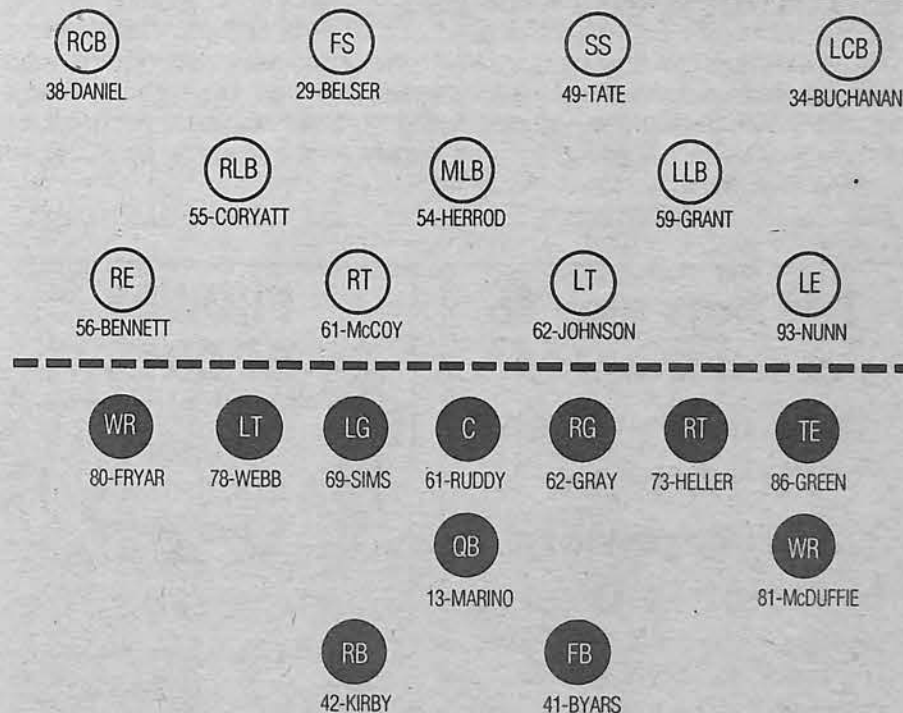
No.	Name	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Exp.	College
10	Pete Stoyanovich	PK	5-11	195	7	Indiana
11	Dan McGwire	QB	6-8	240	5	San Diego State
13	Dan Marino	QB	6-4	224	12	Pittsburgh
17	John Kidd	P	6-3	214	12	Northwestern
19	Bernie Kosar	QB	6-5	214	11	Miami
23	Troy Vincent	CB	6-0	195	4	Wisconsin
24	Pat Johnson	S	6-1	204	1	Purdue
25	Louis Oliver	S	6-2	224	7	Florida
27	Terrell Buckley	CB	5-9	176	4	Florida State
28	Gene Atkins	S	5-11	201	9	Florida A&M
29	Frankie Smith	CB	5-9	182	3	Baylor
30	Bernie Parmalee	RB	5-11	196	4	Ball State
31	Sean Hill	CB	5-10	179	2	Montana State
35	Michael Stewart	S	5-10	202	9	Fresno State
37	J.B. Brown	CB	6-0	191	7	Maryland
40	Irving Spikes	RB	5-8	206	2	N.E. Louisiana
41	Keith Byars	FB	6-1	255	10	Ohio State
42	Terry Kirby	RB	6-1	218	3	Virginia
48	Lee McClinton	FB	5-11	252	R	New Hampshire
49	Robert Wilson	FB	6-0	255	3	Texas A&M
50	Dwight Hollier	LB	6-2	250	4	North Carolina
51	Bryan Cox	LB	6-4	248	5	Western Illinois
52	Jeff Kopp	LB	6-3	243	R	Southern Cal
53	Aubrey Beavers	LB	6-3	231	2	Oklahoma
55	Chris Singleton	LB	6-2	246	6	Arizona
57	Dion Fcox	LB	6-3	250	2	James Madison
59	Dewayne Dotson	LB	6-1	256	1	Mississippi
60	Bert Weidner	G	6-2	295	6	Kent State
61	Tim Ruddy	C	6-3	290	2	Notre Dame
62	Chris Gray	G	6-4	292	3	Auburn
68	Andrew Greene	G	6-3	304	R	Indiana
69	Keith Sims	G	6-3	309	6	Iowa State
71	Ethan Albright	T	6-5	292	1	North Carolina
72	Tom McHale	OL	6-4	290	9	Cornell
73	Ron Heller	T	6-6	290	12	Penn State
74	Ed Hawthorne	NT	6-1	305	R	Minnesota
78	Richmond Webb	T	6-6	303	6	Texas A&M
79	Billy Milner	T	6-5	293	R	Houston
80	Irving Fryar	WR	6-0	200	12	Nebraska
81	O.J. McDuffie	WR	5-10	188	3	Penn State
83	Rickey Sanders	WR	5-11	185	10	SW Texas State
84	Gary Clark	WR	5-9	175	11	James Madison
85	Ronnie Williams	TE	6-3	258	3	Oklahoma State
86	Eric Green	TE	6-5	280	6	Liberty
87	Mike Williams	WR	6-0	183	5	Northwestern
89	Randal Hill	WR	5-10	180	5	Miami (Fla.)
90	Marco Coleman	DE	6-3	267	4	Georgia Tech
91	Jeff Cross	DE	6-4	280	8	Missouri
93	Trace Armstrong	DE	6-4	260	7	Florida
94	Steve Emtman	DT	6-4	284	4	Washington
95	Tim Bowens	DT	6-4	310	2	Mississippi
96	Norman Hand	DT	6-3	329	R	Mississippi
99	Chuck Klingbeil	NT	6-1	288	5	Northern Michigan



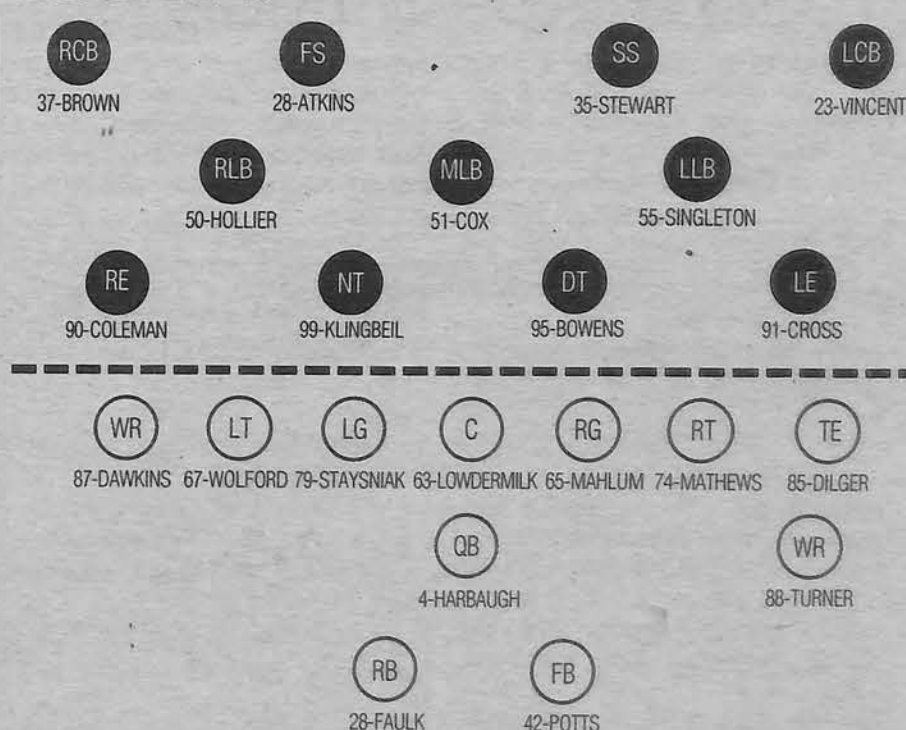
Indianapolis Colts

No.	Name	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Exp.	College
3	Mike Cofer	K	6-1	195	7	North Carolina State
4	Jim Harbaugh	QB	6-3	215	9	Michigan
7	Craig Erickson	QB	6-2	205	4	Miami (Fla.)
10	Wendell Davis	WR	6-0	188	7	LSU
11	Paul Justin	QB	6-4	215	1	Arizona State
16	Bobby Olive	WR	5-11	170	1	Ohio State
17	Chris Gardocki	P	6-1	199	5	Clemson
18	Ben Bronson	WR	5-10	165	R	Baylor
21	Lamont Warren	RB	5-11	211	2	Colorado
25	Ronald Humphrey	RB	5-10	211	2	Mississippi Valley St.
28	Marshall Faulk	RB	5-10	205	2	San Diego State
29	Jason Belser	DB	5-9	185	4	Oklahoma
30	Derwin Gray	DB	5-11	203	3	Brigham Young
32	Zack Crockett	RB	6-2	241	R	Florida State
33	Ashley Ambrose	DB	5-10	192	4	Mississippi Valley St.
34	Ray Buchanan	DB	5-9	189	3	Louisville
35	Conrad Clarks	DB	5-10	200	R	N.E. Louisiana
36	Damon Watts	DB	5-10	173	2	Indiana
38	Eugene Daniel	DB	5-11	180	12	LSU
40	Ray McElroy	DB	5-11	195	R	Eastern Illinois
42	Roosevelt Potts	RB	6-0	260	3	N.E. Louisiana
49	David Tate	DB	6-1	212	8	Colorado
51	Trev Alberts	LB	6-4	245	2	Nebraska
54	Jeff Herrod	LB	6-0	245	8	Mississippi
55	Quentin Coryatt	LB	6-3	246	4	Texas A&M
56	Tony Bennett	LB	6-2	242	6	Mississippi
57	Devon McDonald	LB	6-4	228	3	Notre Dame
58	Glen Sanders	LB	6-1	236	3	Louisiana Tech
59	Stephen Grant	LB	6-0	240	4	West Virginia
61	Tony McCoy	DT	6-0	282	4	Florida
62	Ellis Johnson	DE/T	6-2	298	R	Florida
63	Kirk Lowdermilk	C	6-4	284	11	Ohio State
64	Garin Patrick	OL	6-3	269	1	Louisville
65	Eric Mahlum	OG	6-4	290	2	California
67	Will Wolford	OT	6-5	295	10	Vanderbilt
71	Kipp Vickers	OL	6-2	296	1	Miami (Fla.)
72	Derek West	OT	6-8	303	R	Colorado
74	Jason Mathews	OT	6-5	288	2	Texas A&M
75	Shawn Harper	OT	6-3	290	1	Indiana
79	Joe Staysniak	OG	6-5	292	5	Ohio State
80	Aaron Bailey	WR	5-10	184	2	Louisville
81	Thomas McLemore	TE	6-5	250	3	Southern
83	Bradford Banta	TE	6-6	257	2	USC
85	Ken Dilger	TE	6-5	256	R	Illinois
86	Brian Stablein	WR	6-1	190	1	Ohio State
87	Sean Dawkins	WR	6-4	211	3	California
88	Floyd Turner	WR	5-11	199	6	N.W. Louisiana
92	Steve Morrison	LB	6-3	246	R	Michigan
93	Freddie Joe Nunn	DE	6-5	258	11	Mississippi
95	Bernard Whittington	DE	6-6	278	2	Indiana
97	Scott Radecic	LB	6-3	243	12	Penn State
98	Tony Siragusa	DT	6-3	315	6	Pittsburgh
99	Mike Pelfton	DT	6-2	284	R	Auburn

STARTING LINEUPS



WHEN THE DOLPHINS HAVE THE BALL



WHEN THE COLTS HAVE THE BALL

Countdown to Kickoff

MIAMI DOLPHINS vs. INDIANAPOLIS COLTS

GAME FACTS

• **DATE** Oct. 8, 1995
 • **TIME** 4 p.m. EDT
 • **SITE** Joe Robbie Stadium
 • **ATTENDANCE** 73,000

THE SERIES

The Dolphins lead 36-15, and have a 5-3 edge at Joe Robbie Stadium. Miami won 14 consecutive games against the Colts in the 1980s, while the Colts' longest winning streak in the series is five games. The teams have met once in the playoffs, with the Dolphins winning 21-0 in the 1971 AFC Championship game.

LAST MEETING

The Dolphins failed to score a touchdown for the first time since 1992 in a 10-6 loss at the RCA Dome Dec. 18, 1994. Miami had a chance to win late after getting a first down at the Indy 2, but Bernie Parmalee was stuffed on first down and Dan Marino threw three straight incompletions to clinch the Colts victory. The only touchdown of the game came on a 75-yard punt return by Dewell Brewer.

CONNECTIONS

Dolphins defensive lineman Steve Emtman was the Colts' first pick in the 1992 draft and played in Indianapolis for three years. Don Shula began his head-coaching career with the Colts in 1963, and Dolphins assistants George Hill and Mike Westhoff both also spent time with the Colts.

WHEN THE DOLPHINS HAVE THE BALL

The Colts have gotten off to a very slow start defensively; they entered their bye week without a single interception or sack in the first three games. The team tried using linebacker Trev Alberts, a former No. 1 pick, as a defensive end while switching Tony Bennett from right to left defensive end. The move didn't work, from both ends. Coming up with the right combination up front is a key for the Colts. First-round pick Ellis Johnson should become a factor before too long. The linebacker corps, led by the underrated and productive Jeff Herrod, very well might be the strength of the defense. The secondary is solid, particularly at cornerback with Ray Buchanan and Eugene Daniel.

Last Week

Marshall Faulk rushed for a career-high 177 yards, matching his total for the first three games, to help the Colts (2-2) knock off the unbeaten St. Louis Rams 21-18 at the RCA Dome. Faulk's effort helped the Colts top the 200-yard rushing mark for the first time since 1988. The Colts defense also chipped in, forcing the first three turnovers (two interceptions and a fumble) of the season by the Rams.

PLAYERS TO WATCH



MARSHALL FAULK

The easy choice as 1994 Offensive Rookie of the Year has found the going a lot tougher early in his second season.

Yet Faulk still is the central figure in the Indianapolis offense and he led the team in rushing yardage and receptions entering last Sunday's game against the St. Louis Rams.

The second overall pick in the 1994 draft, Faulk is a shifty runner with the speed to go outside and break a long one any time he touches the ball.



TONY BENNETT

After experimenting with putting Bennett at left defensive end, the Colts have switched him back to his more familiar spot on the right side in the hopes he can regain his pass-rushing touch.

After coming over from Green Bay as an unrestricted free agent last season, Bennett led the Colts with nine sacks in 1994. He also had years of 13 and 13½ sacks with Green Bay in 1991 and 1992.

Bennett, a converted linebacker, who uses his speed to get to the QB, didn't have a sack after three games.

KEY MATCHUPS

Colts wide receiver Sean Dawkins and Floyd Turner vs. the Dolphins secondary: The Colts need to be able to throw the ball downfield to take some pressure off Marshall Faulk. That doesn't figure to be easy against a Dolphins defense that has proven stingy early on.

Dolphins defensive end Trace Armstrong vs. Colts offensive tackle Will Wolford: Armstrong has been a terror as a pass rusher from the left side early on, but he faces a major challenge in Wolford, one of the best pass blockers in the AFC.

Dolphins quarterback Dan Marino vs. Colts cornerback Ray Buchanan: Buchanan, who has developed into a top-notch cornerback, came close to helping the Colts pull off an upset at Joe Robbie Stadium last year with an interception he returned 28 yards for a touchdown. Marino needs to be aware of him.

STAT OF THE WEEK

ROOKIE RAMPAGE

Top rookie rushers in NFL history

Player	Team	Year	Yards
Eric Dickerson	Rams	1983	1,808
George Rogers	N.O.	1981	1,674
Ottis Anderson	St.L.	1979	1,605
Barry Sanders	Det.	1989	1,470
Earl Campbell	Hou.	1978	1,450
Curt Warner	Sea.	1983	1,449
Jerome Bettis	Rams	1993	1,429
Rueben Mayes	N.O.	1986	1,353
Billy Sims	Det.	1980	1,303
Marshall Faulk	Ind.	1994	1,282

WHEN THE COLTS HAVE THE BALL

The Colts thought they had solidified their quarterback position when they traded for former Tampa Bay starter Craig Erickson in the offseason. But he got off to a miserable start and was replaced by holdover Jim Harbaugh in each of the first two games. Now, Harbaugh has taken over as the starter and he has done a solid job, both with his throwing and scrambling. Marshall Faulk hasn't exploded just yet, which is part of the reason the Colts have struggled offensively. Losing free agent wide receiver Flipper Anderson to a season-ending knee injury just two weeks into the season was a major blow to the offense. To compensate, the Colts need better production from former No. 1 pick Sean Dawkins.

THE COACHES

DON SHULA

In his 33rd season, Don Shula is one of only two active NFL coaches to have a former player in the Hall of Fame. Shula has coached 12 Hall of Famers, including five Dolphins players, while Buffalo's Marv Levy has coached two.



TED MARCHIBRODA

In the fourth season of his second tour of duty with the Colts, Ted Marchibroda is a veteran of 33 NFL seasons. He previously coached the Colts from 1975-79, winning three AFC East titles during that period.



Last Word

66

We feel very strongly in Indianapolis that we have turned the corner as a team.

— COACH TED MARCHIBRODA
AFTER SEASON-OPENING LOSS

OVERVIEW

Mail All Letters To: Overview, P.O. Box 526600, Miami, FL 33152 or Fax to (305) 477-1346

Dear Overview:

I love the Dolphins, have since '71, but I sit here Monday morning wondering if the Bengals were really that good or the Dolphins "D" just thought it was a scrimmage and got caught in a fight to win at the end. The great thing for the Fins is that Dan Marino is the best player on the team (along with the receivers), and was able to pull another one out at the end. My stomach was in knots, however exciting it may have been. I hope the defense will regroup and now knows that they have to play with intensity in every game, regardless of the opponent. The Colts are next and Faulk just tore up the Rams, which should let the Dolphins know what they will try again. Please shut down Faulk and the Colts. It will restore my confidence in the "D" and shut up the talk show hosts out here in California. GO DOLPHINS!

John Keane
Los Angeles, Calif.

Dear Overview:

Although I read many letters in your paper praising Don Shula, they always seem to be general compliments based on his past accomplishments. After watching all of the games this year at once on satellite, I have noticed how many teams have major coaching problems, where mental errors and bad plays mean the difference between winning and losing.

I cannot remember more than two times in the past 10 years that the Dolphins have made an error involving clock management or bad play-calling in the final minutes of a game. Even though last season ended in disappointment, the Fins were by far the NFL's most exciting team, and they were in almost every game until the final seconds. Coach Shula and Dan Marino have made impeccable clock management and play-calling so commonplace that it is always overlooked. Coach, here's one fan who knows why you've won more games than anyone ever will and why you are still THE premier coach in the league.

Doug Bader
Anaheim, Calif.

Dear Overview:

I have never been as excited with my favorite team since the 1972 season. We are deep, talent-laden on both sides on the ball and executing effectively. But there is still room for improvement. The improvement that seems to be necessary is only in the defensive *play design*. We are getting much more pressure on the opposing quarterbacks than in previous years, but need more "hurries" and sacks. I hope Mr. Olivadotti has taken a good long look at the Steelers pass-rushing scheme and picked up some pointers. They have less talent, but seem to get more harassment.

Maybe we need to have more of a variety of

blitzes, including cornerbacks, a second line-backer and an occasional safety. In the "dime" package, maybe let Louis Oliver loose on a delayed blitz, confusing the blocking scheme. We have outstanding man-to-man pass coverage people and could use it more often.

Chris Leogrande
Lake Hiawatha, N.J.

Dear Overview:

I would like to start by saying what a terrific publication you have! This is my fifth year of receiving *Dolphin Digest*. I do not know how I got along without it for all those years, but I will not go without it ever again.

I would just like to say a few things:

1) I am tired of hearing how Shula needs to step down for Johnson! I'll take Don over Jimmy any day. Shula is now, and always will be the best coach!

2) With this defense and offense put together, this is the year the Fins will win it all! The lucky 13 factor. I just hope we can stay healthy and consistent.

3) Coach Olivadotti, STOP USING THAT STUPID PREVENT DEFENSE!! All it does is let the other team back in the game, like Pittsburgh. Thank you J.B. for the save! It also lets the other teams run up the total yards, which is why we have been so low in pass defense.

4) When Bernie goes in, let him throw! He is the best backup in the league and would be starting for any other team. Against Pittsburgh, the run was not there, so let Bernie throw!

Bryan DePover
Rock Island, Ill.

Dear Overview:

Oh my God! I just don't know what else to say about these new-look Dolphins. Capital "D" as in DEE-FENCE. Let's see now: seven points against the Jets (the offense gave up seven), three points against the Patriots (most every publication has Drew as the second coming of Unitas) and then 10 against the projected AFC champion Steelers. Can it get any better than this? It sure has been a long time since there has been more than one side of the ball in Miami. Please, please, please, any DOLPHINS fans in Denver, Colo. — I'm looking for a place to watch my beloved Fins on Oct. 22 and 29. Call me collect at 817-685-2107 and tell me where I can see them while I'm in Denver.

Paul W. Bailer
Bedford, Texas

Dear Overview:

I've been a big Dolfan since 1971, when we got creamed by Dallas in the Super Bowl. I've stuck by my team through highs and lows over the years. This year looks to be very promising,

but I have one major concern.

The Dolphins over the past several years have proven to be fast starters, winning early in the season, but we seem to become only mediocre in December when the games really matter.

They called Reggie Jackson "Mr. October," because he always came through when it mattered; unfortunately, we cannot say the same about our beloved Dolphins. Granted, injuries have played a big part in the late-season demise, but if we are to go all the way this year, our backups will have to come through because injuries are almost totally unavoidable.

Dale Holder
Greensboro, N.C.

Dear Overview:

I have a comment directed to one of last week's writers — John Nicholson of Sandusky, Ohio. First of all, quit acting like you're a coach, and quit telling the real coaches how to coach. I hate all of you so-called Dolphins fans who criticize them all the time, rather than supporting them. Also, stop being so negative about the Fins this year and start getting pumped for the Super Bowl like real fans. Last, but not least, Mr. Nicholson, you are from Ohio and so am I, so quit giving Ohio a bad name for Dolphins fans.

Kevin Boyd
Lancaster, Ohio

Dear Overview:

I'm a big Dolphins fan and happy with their start, but it's time to face reality.

During the first halves of some games, and last year's game against the Chargers, we looked like Super Bowl contenders, but in the second half, our offensive game plan was as follows: three-and-out! Super Bowl champions, such as the Cowboys and 49ers, don't play this ultra-conservative style when they're ahead.

Picture this, Dolfans: Super Bowl XXX, Dolphins are leading the 49ers 20-3 late in the third quarter (just like in the Monday night game against Pittsburgh). If a third-string quarterback named Jim Miller passes for almost 200 yards in the fourth quarter, what do you think Steve Young will do?

Danny Florentine
Matawan, N.J.

Dear Overview:

Being a Dolphins fan for over 20 years now, it is so good to see a *complete* Miami Dolphins team this year!

With a good running game, a defense with an attitude and a physical presence about them, this is definitely the year for the Fish to end the NFC dominance in the big game!

Bob Dickman
Sandusky, Ohio



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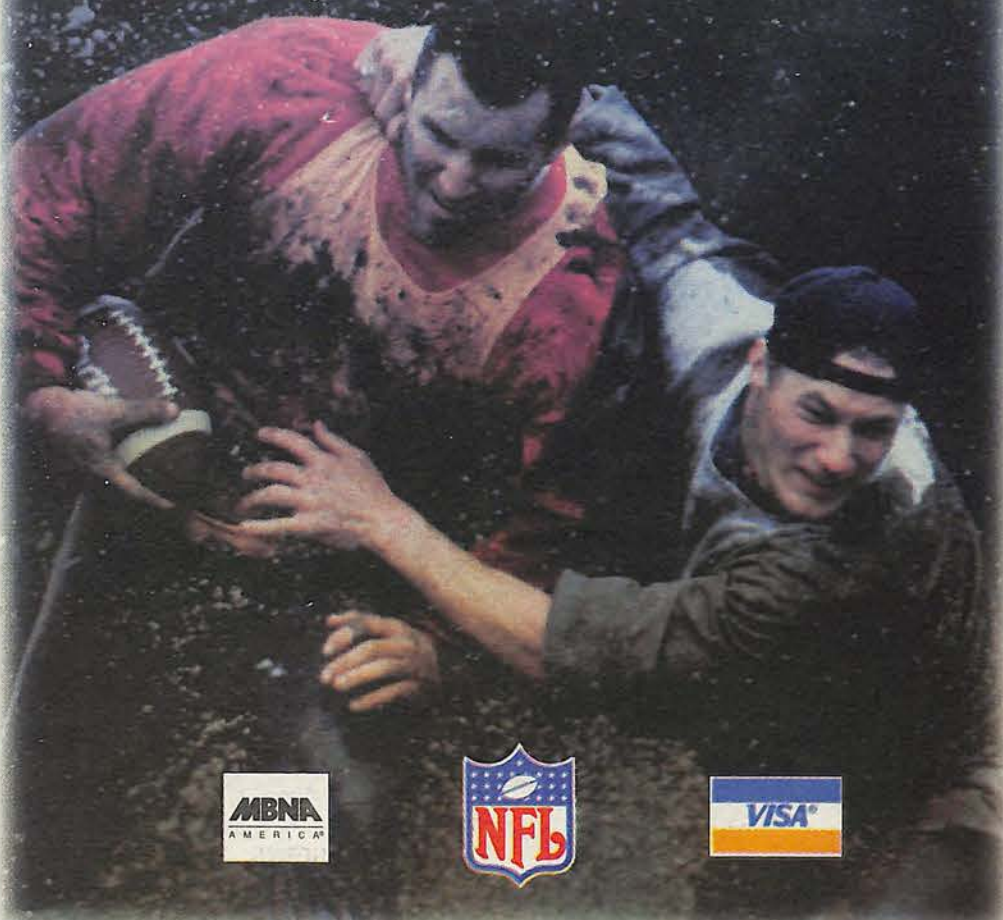
69 GREEN BAY PACKERS P-10:00AM C-12:00PM E-1:00PM	7			
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72 BUFFALO BILLS				
73 WASHINGTON REDSKINS P-10:00AM C-12:00PM E-1:00PM	3			
74 PHILADELPHIA EAGLES				
75 HOUSTON OILERS P-10:00AM C-12:00PM E-1:00PM	10½			
76 MINNESOTA VIKINGS				
77 CINCINNATI BENGALS P-10:00AM C-12:00PM E-1:00PM	4			
78 TAMPA BAY BUCCANEERS	10½			
79 PITTSBURGH STEELERS P-10:00AM C-12:00PM E-1:00PM				
80 JACKSONVILLE JAGUARS				
81 CAROLINA PANTHERS P-10:00AM C-12:00PM E-1:00PM	12			
82 CHICAGO BEARS				
83 INDIANAPOLIS COLTS P-1:00PM C-3:00PM E-4:00PM	10			
84 MIAMI DOLPHINS				
85 SEATTLE SEAHAWKS P-1:00PM C-3:00PM E-4:00PM	10			
86 OAKLAND RAIDERS	3			
87 CLEVELAND BROWNS P-1:00PM C-3:00PM E-4:00PM				
88 DETROIT LIONS				
89 ARIZONA CARDINALS P-1:00PM C-3:00PM E-4:00PM	3½			
90 NEW YORK GIANTS				
91 DENVER BRONCOS (N) P-5:00PM C-7:00PM E-9:00PM	3			
92 NEW ENGLAND PATRIOTS TNT				

Monday, October 9, 1995

93 SAN DIEGO CHARGERS (N) P-5:00PM C-7:00PM E-9:00PM				
94 KANSAS CITY CHIEFS ABC	3			

BYE WEEK: FALCONS, SAINTS, RAMS, 49ERS

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